



Table Tennis News

No. 206

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Like Alison & Chen
Jaques tables are winners

Jaques

Further memories of the Open



Chief Executive Elaine Shaw and Table Tennis News Editor John Wood



Open champion Jean Philippe Gatien is served a meal by NIA Catering Assistant Julie Larkin



Tournament Referee Tony Chatwin pictured leaving the Holiday Inn



Looks like these four are really enjoying rolling-up the playing surfaces. Pictured (left to right) are Brian Lloyd, Ken Elliott, Doreen Nightingale and Diccon Gray



TABLE TENNIS NEWS

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Front cover: This season's new victorious Men's and Women's singles champions, Chen Xinhua and Alison Gordon. (Picture by John F.A. Wood)

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Alison Gordon is presented with her National Championships Women's Singles trophy by Oldham's Mayor Councillor Ralph Semple, MBE, JP and ETTA Chairman Alan Ransome

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Editor's Note

WHAT a month it's been for Alison Gordon, 'Women of the Month', who followed up last month's top performance when she qualified for the Olympics, by beating, firstly, Lisa Lomas, then Andrea Holt to take the coveted Womens Singles crown at the National Championships, held at Oldham in March.

Gordon then, the following weekend, won the South of England 3 Star tournament, beating Janet Smith in the final, at the Westcroft Sports Centre, Carshalton.

It's also been a dramatic month for Chen Xinhua, who with a world class display of superb defence and electrifying counter attacks, beat England's no.1 Carl Prean, to become the National Men's Singles champion.

But, the real highlight of the month was the great news that our Men's team have battled their way back into the Super Division of the Joola European League (see Chairman's Report).

Firstly, they won 4-1 in Saltzberg, then they lost 3-4 to Austria in Hull. But in the second leg we only needed two games for promotion.

For me the first weekend of the Women's British League, held at the Crystal Leisure Centre, Stourbridge, was slightly tainted, spoiling, what was otherwise, a fabulous weekend, when somebody broke into my car and stole all my luggage.

This happened on the Saturday, so therefore I didn't have a change of clothing for the Sunday. But, a kind lady came to my rescue, by giving me a clean shirt. Sylvia Broadbent, the non-playing captain of Bayer Bradford, gave me one of her team's spare shirts. I had a real problem though, the buttons were on the wrong side!

John F.A. Wood

NEXT ISSUE

- * Feature on the European Championships in Stuggart
- * Report on the ETTA Under 18/21 Championships

TABLE TENNIS NEWS 1992

Publishing dates:

MAY/JUNE
1st June 1992
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Sandra Roden is on the way back!

SANDRA RODEN from Stourbridge is on the road to recovery, following an operation, when her patellae were cleaned-up, on both knees.

Roden, who was ranked at No.10 before her operation, hopes to start training again this coming summer.

It was good news for Sandra and English Women's table tennis when she threw away her second walking stick at the National Championships, held recently at Stourbridge.

To celebrate her comeback, Sandra qualified as the 2000th County Umpire.

Sandra, who is pictured right, is the daughter of celebrated Dudley and District League Secretary and National Umpire, David Roden.



Clive is our new Events Manager

CLIVE OAKMAN is the ETTA's new National Events Manager. Clive, formerly the Association's Vice Chairman (Marketing) took up the post on 1st March, having completed the sale of his own business in February.

Father of two daughters, Clive brings a wealth of table tennis knowledge and experience to the ETTA's staff. He has been involved in organising table tennis events for some 12 years, culminating in leading the organising team as Tournament Director in this year's very successful Cadbury's Chocolate Break English Open at the National Indoor Arena, Birmingham, in January.

As Events Manager he will take responsibility for all national championships and England's home international matches. He will also act as ETTA's liaison with British League and County Championships.



Clive Oakman

A former National Councillor and member of Management Committee, Clive Oakman went into working full time in table tennis in 1984 when he established, with his wife Chris, their own table tennis business, Clive Oakman Table Tennis, which was a specialised table tennis equipment service, including hire of equipment and mail order. Prior to that he worked as Area Manager and subsequently Personnel Manager of a chain of newsagents.

During his time as Vice Chairman (Marketing) the ETTA have had a very heavy schedule of events in which Clive has been considerably involved on a day-to-day basis. In addition to the usual programme of men's and women's European League matches, the England team has also been involved in a two-match fixture against Japan as part of the Japan Festival and a seven match tour of England by the Chinese over New Year. The Junior National Championships in December and the Senior Nationals all demanded a considerable amount of his time.

Clive will bring a new dimension to this important post by his forward looking and creative approach.

Revision of ITTF Bands

SINCE the introduction of the new HALEX Ranking Scheme at the start of the 1991-2 playing season, due both to good results against foreign opposition and the protection afforded to losses, the points totals of the players involved in International Competition have increased.

If the ITTF rating bands were not reviewed periodically ALL matches played by these players would become expected wins with an equivalent high points reduction in the event of a loss. With this in mind I have in consultation with Donald Parker increased the ITTF Bands as shown below.

The new bands will be used for all matches entered starting with PERIOD 5 results now arriving.

MEN			WOMEN		
BAND	WORLD POS'N	POINTS	BAND	WORLD POS'N	POINTS
A	1-10	3550	A	1-10	3150
B	11-20	2450	B	11-30	3050
C	21-30	3360	C	31-50	2950
D	31-40	3280	D	51-70	2850
E	41-50	3190	E	71-100	2750
F	51-100	3110	F	101-150	2600
G	101-200	3050	G	151-200	2500
H	201-300	2975	H	OVER 200	2400
J	OVER 300	2900			

In order to maintain a fair system the bands will continue to be reviewed as necessary.

S. E. SHERLOCK, Chairman Ranking Panel

Chen captures second national trophy

CHEN XINHUA won his second Men's Singles National crown, when he won the English National Championships title, beating Carl Prean in the final.

His first trophy he won in 1981, when he was the first defender to win the Chinese Men's Singles Championships.

Promotion in Humberside

AFTER two years in the First Division, England men regained promotion into the Super Division of the Joola European League by beating Austria 7-5 on aggregate in the final of the First Division. The team laid the groundwork in Salzburg on 14th March when England beat the Austrians 4-1 in the first leg. This left England needing 2 sets in the Humberside fixture, sponsored by Humberside County Council, to gain promotion, and this was achieved in the first three sets of the evening as England led 2-1. The Austrians continued to play well and eventually won the match by 4 sets to 3.

The mainstay of the England team was Carl Prean who won both his singles in Austria and combined with Alan Cooke to win the doubles, then Carl won his first singles in Hull against Palmi and for the second time the doubles with Alan. Chen Xinhua also played a very important role, winning his only singles in Austria and the second singles in Hull which gave England the championship. Congratulations to the whole team including captain, Donald Parker. The top of the First Division with Austria and Czechoslovakia is very strong and our team have done well to earn their place back in the top division of the European League.

One of the keys to success in the European League has been the doubles combination of Carl Prean and Alan Cooke. They were brought back together as a pair by Donald Parker partway through the season after the Prean/Michael O'Driscoll pairing had not worked out and since then have done remarkably well, not just in the European League, but also in the Cadbury's Chocolate Break English Open and in the European Doubles Qualification Tournament in Gdansk where they qualified to participate in Barcelona.

Doubles have been introduced for the first time into the Men's Team event in the European Championships in Stuttgart later this month, so that the production of a successful partnership could have an important influence on the performance of our Men's Team who must be regarded as potential medal prospects. The chances of



Alan Ransome

success in Stuttgart from an England viewpoint look good as with the right draw we have several players, both men and women, who have real chances of honours.

Whilst the Championships are being played in Stuttgart the European Table Tennis Union Congress and committee meetings will all be taking place. Johnny Leach and I will be representing the Association at several important meetings. The agenda for Congress has never been fuller. Several Constitution changes are proposed, the siting of a professional office for the E.T.T.U. is on the agenda, as is a decision on where to hold the 1994 Championships in which the E.T.T.A. have indicated an interest.

Quite separately the Swaythling Club World Veterans Committee will decide on the venue for the 1994 World Veterans Championships. England have applied to run this championship but I understand that there is strong competition from countries as far apart as Norway and Australia so that a good presentation from our team will be important.

A great deal of work has been undertaken in an attempt to raise the £1.1m budget to stage the European Championships in this country at Easter 1994. At the time of writing it is not clear whether we will be successful in raising the necessary funds by 10th April. The Chief Executive, Elaine Shaw, and myself have done our utmost to put the package together but the final outcome will depend on the

decisions of our potential supporters.

The European Championships will see the retirement of George Yates as the E.T.T.U. General Secretary following a stroke at the beginning of January. No praise is too high for the work that George has done for table tennis, not just for the E.T.T.U. but also for ourselves, both locally and nationally. George edited the E.T.T.A. News for 19 years and was Deputy Chairman of the E.T.T.U. for 17 years from 1970 to 1987. Happily George had recovered sufficiently to attend the National Championships (English Closed) at Oldham in March. It was good to see him again and we wish him well for a speedy recovery to full health and thereafter an enjoyable retirement.

The National Championships, which were sponsored by Manchester 2000, the British Bid to stage the Olympic Games in the year 2000, produced some very good play watched by a large crowd in the North West.

The Men's Singles was won by Chen Xinhua who won a first class final against the holder, Carl Prean. The women's winner was Alison Gordon for the third time. Although Alison first won the Championship in 1984, in my opinion she looked at her best in Oldham. Alison did very well in the Olympic Qualification Tournament in Bolzano and let's hope this revival of form will continue for Stuttgart and on to Barcelona.

The Development Conference to promote Focus Sport entitled "Building Partnerships" will take place at Lilleshall on 4th and 5th April. The Sports Council are providing two of their leading people, Cyril Villiers the Director of the Yorkshire and Humberside Sports Council and the Focus Sport Co-Ordinator, and the table tennis Liaison Officer from the National Sports Council in London, Roger Davis, to speak to our Regional Development and Coaching personnel. The Sports Council have also given table tennis a plug by allocating an exhibition stand for the E.T.T.A. at the Recreation Management Conference at the N.E.C. in Birmingham at the end of March, so allowing Mike Lewis and Diccon Gray the opportunity to talk to senior people in local authority recreation departments from all parts of the country.

The first major grant has been allocated to table tennis from the

Foundation for Sport and the Arts. With some assistance from the E.T.T.A., the Barrow League have applied to convert a redundant school gymnasium into a table tennis centre and have received a grant from the Foundation in excess of £30,000, as well as assistance from the Sports Council Northern Region, Cumbria County Council and the Barrow District Council. In December it looked as if the bulldozers were going in and the opportunity for table tennis lost, but with hard work from John Reed, Roger Harris, Mike Yardley and their colleagues in applying for grants and putting their case, they should have a table tennis centre in Barrow to be proud of for many years to come.

Another government initiative that could be of tremendous value to table tennis was announced by the Sports Minister in December. Aimed at local initiatives, the Government will go pound for pound matching commercial sponsorship attracted by the sport, subject to grant approval. The full

details have not yet been published, but from what I can gather so far, this could be of great value to tournament organisers and British League club managers in particular. Further details will be published as soon as I receive them.

The Halex Ranking Scheme which was introduced in October with the assistance of the Canadian Association has been the subject of much comment. Many members have spoken to me personally and given me their views and I know that members of the Ranking Committee have received comments. Certainly the administration of the scheme has gone extremely well. Lists have been published on a regular basis and on time which has not always been the case in the past. The Ranking Committee will meet in Bridlington next month to review the scheme for next season. All comments from our members are welcome and will be taken into consideration. If you would like to have some input, please

put your thoughts on paper and send them to the Ranking Chairman, Stuart Sherlock for circulation to the rest of the Committee.

The E.T.T.A. national election season has just concluded. There was only one election for office in which Tony Chatwin was successful in his bid to become Deputy Chairman following the retirement of Stuart Sneyd. Peter Hillier and I were elected unopposed and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members for their confidence. It was particularly gratifying to receive support in the way of a nomination from a number of Associations who did not support me in last year's election. In some respects times are getting harder for table tennis and keeping the balance sheet level is an on going problem. On the other hand, there are great opportunities ahead and if we can take advantage of them then there is not doubt that the sport can start growing again, both in terms of members and public perception.

Dummy ratings for Welsh & Irish

THE list gives the current ratings of Welsh and Irish players at the time of the March 1992 Ranking Lists. These dummy ratings will float in the normal way according to the players' results. Ratings for Scottish and other players are being verified and will be published shortly.

We have identified two areas where intervention is needed to maintain the accuracy of dummy ratings:

1. Players whose standard of play changes considerably, perhaps the younger players, but who don't play sufficient matches in a single playing period to trigger the re-rating process. Improving players would have a string of 'unexpected' wins to their credit, while anyone who beat them would not gain full credit for doing so.
2. Players who only play in England occasionally and therefore keep an initial rating for a considerable time. It is clearly in everyone's interest to establish a fair rating for every player as quickly as possible.

The Ranking Panel will review all dummy ratings periodically and will make adjustments as necessary.

*Geoff Twiss
on behalf of the Ranking Panel*

Welsh Women/Girls	Rating
Natasha Williams	2400
Lesley Keast	2350
Sian Evans	2230
Laura Collier	1837
Joanne Lee	1793
Meinir Davies	1492
Stacey Thomas	1470
Joanna Bastin	1468
Janine Belby	1461
Rachel Norris	1378
Claire Brettell	1301
Bethan Daunton	1218
Julie Furber	1218
Delyth Davies	1194

Irish Women/Girls	Rating
Emma Turner	1405
Niamh Hogan	1150
Brioni Lane	1139
Suzanne Monnelly	1100
Katherine Lynch	1100
Michelle McGreevey	1034
Andrea Glover	1018

Irish Men/Boys	Rating
Milton Meneely	2807
Martin Kinsella	2360
Jonathan Cowan	1850
Pat Keane	1725
David Butler	1450
Ryan Glass	1450
Brian McRandall	1450
Neil Strong	1450
Vincent Meaney	1250
Paul Fitzpatrick	1220
Ger Boyle	1200
Dominic McGreevey	1150
Brian Fitzgerald	1100
Darten Lynch	1100
Owen Hehir	995
Colin Anderson	986
Eoin Byrne	920
Alan Monnelly	850

Welsh Men/Boys	Rating
Steve Ward	2953
Nigel Tyler	2907
Marc Simon	2900
Tony Healan	2716
Brian Jeanes	2697
Paul Lewis	2668
John Bult	2550
John Ellis	2532
Nigel Thomas	2499
Jeffrey Morgan	2489
George Evans	2442
David Buck	2430
Steven Gill	2279
Byron Davies	2214
Lee Thomas	2156
Andrew Evans	2148
Spencer Harris	2118
Andrew Penduck	2100
Mark Evans	2057
Jeremy Hobbs	1988
Tony Holmes	1687
Jonathan Allen	1650
Michael Gabriel	1489
Peter Harry	1469
Paul Robertson	1350
David Evans	1300
David Howarth	1300
Antony Bramwell	1285
Mike Browne	1275
Martin Hopwood	1251
Mark Farrow	1215
Owen Thomas	1214
David Chan	1200
Raymond Witchalls	1199
Richard Bellamy	1193
Dave Randall	1178
Ian Playstead	1151
Andrew Grant	1135
Peter Coyle	1100
Toby Eckley	1100
Paul Hadley	1068
Simon Thomas	1063
Ryan Owen	1040
Ryan Jenkins	1017
Paul Brooks	893
Danny Harris	890

Swashbuckling Chen & Gordon



Chen Xinhua (left) and Alison Gordon

CHEN XINHUA and Alison Gordon took their respective Singles Crowns in swashbuckling style, sweeping their opponents aside at the National Championships, on Sunday 8th March, at the Oldham Sports Centre.

Chen, proudly wearing his England shirt, came from behind in the Men's Singles final against Carl Prean, the holder and no.1 seed, to win the fourth game 21-18 after trailing 12-15, to take the coveted trophy with a superb display of precision defence and quick-fire counter hitting.

Prean took the third game 21-9, with an exciting display of powerful forehand loops.

This final was one of the most exciting contests that I have witnessed this season, between two world class players. It was truly a breath-taking world class final, that had the packed audience on the edge of their seats!

Words and Pictures by John F. A. Wood



John Hilton (left) and Doreen Schofield

The Women's Singles final also lived-up to the very high standard of table tennis that these National Championships produced, with a rejuvenated Alison Gordon rediscovering all her old form to topple the title holder Andrea Holt, off her throne.

Gordon started the final rather tentatively going down 14-21 to Holt's combination of attack and defence, but she sprung back to life in the second attacking her way to a 21-16 victory.

From 8-12 down, in the third, Gordon never looked back hammering home her big forehand drives to win 21-14, allowing Holt only 2 points whilst she blasted her way to victory winning 13 points.

The fourth game saw Gordon win her third National Women's Singles title, 21-14.

Gordon has created a habit of winning this trophy every fourth year.

The most dramatic event

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS - 2

of these championships happened in the men's singles semi-finals between Carl Prean and Desmond Douglas, when Douglas's bat snapped in half, following a backhand drive. Douglas won the point, but was left with only the bat handle in his hand.

At this stage Douglas was leading, having won the first game 21-17, and was 15-14 up in the second, but went 16-21 down in that crucial set playing with a borrowed blade.

Prean now had the bit between his teeth and went on to win the next two games 21-18 and 21-14.

This ended an era for Douglas, for he has played with that old Kenny Style 3 ply blade, for the past 15 years, winning 11 national titles with it.

In the other Men's Singles semi-final, Chen beat former champion Alan Cooke, 13, 15 and 20.

Women's Singles champion Gordon defeated the No.1 seed, Lisa Lomas, in

he semi-finals, with her powerful forehand drives, 19, 16, 12.

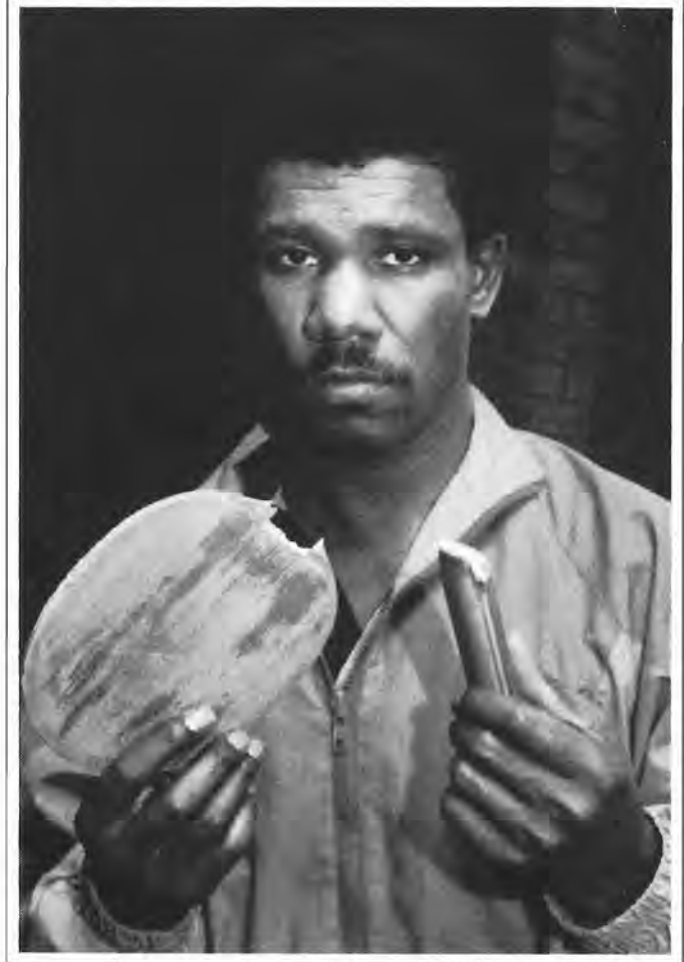
In the other women's singles semi-final Holt did another one of her famous escapes, beating former triple champion, Fiona Elliot, -19, -14, 20, 18 and 20

Defeated Men's Singles semi-finalists Douglas and Cooke did however bounce back to take the Men's Doubles trophy, beating Skylet Andrew and Nicky Mason in a tight final, 19 and 21.

The Women's Doubles final was won for the 5th consecutive year by Lisa Lomas and Fiona Elliot, when they defeated Kate Goodhall and Andrea, 10, -20, 12, in the final.

Lomas and Elliot, who have now created a record with these five wins, are still young enough to win this trophy a few more times and carve their names into English Women's table tennis history.

Elliot went on to capture another trophy when she



Desmond Douglas with broken bat



Lisa Lomas, losing semi-finalist



Carl Prean, losing finalist

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS - 3

partnered Skylet Andrew in the Mixed Doubles final, beating Alison Gordon and John Holland 14 and 12.

This is the 5th time that Elliot and Andrew have won the Mixed Doubles crown, proving that Fiona has developed into a record breaking doubles player.

Once again super talented John Hilton was too strong for the opposition in the Veteran Men's Singles tournament.

Hilton sailed through the rounds with his awkward combination bat, of short and long pimples.

In the final, Hilton beat Malcolm Corking 17 and 15.

Hilton and Corking teamed-up for the Veteran Men's Doubles and in the final they overpowered Derek Schofield and Brian Allison 18 and 10.

Doreen Schofield won the Women's Veteran Singles crown when she beat Devon's Penny Perry 19 and 17.

Perry, who beat Schofield at Wiltshire 19 in the 3rd at the West of England Vets, was this time worn down by the defence of Schofield, losing out in expedite in the second.

Schofield added another trophy to her cabinet, when she partnered Connie Moran in the Veteran Women's Doubles final, beating Eileen Shaler and Shirley Carroll 14 and 17.

Andrea Holt bt Fiona Elliot -19, -14, 20, 18, 20

Final:

Alison Gordon bt Andrea Holt -14, 16, 14, 13

MEN'S DOUBLES

A. Cooke and D. Douglas bt S. Andrew and N. Mason, 14, 10

WOMEN'S DOUBLES

L. Lomas and F. Elliot bt A. Holt and K. Goodhall 10, -20, 12

MIXED DOUBLES

S. Andrew and F. Elliot bt J. Holland and A. Gordon 14, 12

VETERAN MEN'S SINGLES

J. Hilton bt M. Corking 17, 15

VETERAN WOMEN'S SINGLES

D. Schofield bt P. Perry 19, 17

VETERAN MEN'S DOUBLES

J. Hilton and M. Corking bt D. Schofield and B. Allison 18, 10

VETERAN WOMEN'S DOUBLES

D. Schofield and C. Moran bt E. Shaler and S. Carroll 14, 17



● Top picture: Men's Doubles champions Alan Cooke and Desmond Douglas. Next from top: ETTA Chairman Alan Ransome presents the Mixed Doubles Cup to Skylet Andrew and Fiona Elliot. Next, umpire Stuart Sherlock from Blackpool surveys the scene at Oldham. Bottom picture: 'The Press Room Boys' - Press Officer Brian Spicer is pictured with (left to right) Richard Eaton, Colin Fuller and John Woodford

RESULTS

MEN'S SINGLES

Semi-finals:

Chen Xinhua bt Alan Cooke 13, 15, 20

Carl Preat bt Desmond Douglas -17, 16, 18, 14

Final:

Chen Xinhua bt Carl Preat 17, 16, -9, 18

WOMEN'S SINGLES

Semi-finals:

Alison Gordon bt Lisa Lomas 19, 16, 12

Bolzano spectacular

CHAIRMAN Alan Ransome gave readers an excellent summary of the British successes in last month's magazine. There were however, a number of other happenings well worth reporting as Great Britain were represented by a party of thirteen at Bolzano in the European Zone Qualification Tournament.

Unlucky perhaps, only for Alan Cooke who try as he may, could not climb the mountains and failed to qualify.

But, every effort was made by the five players and their five personal coaches to chase the Barcelona slots and to get three players through was an achievement, unexpected in some quarters.

Matthew Syed, Lisa Lomas and surprise, surprise, Alison Gordon are now Olympians and looking forward with immense relish to playing a part in the greatest sporting event in the history of the world, the Olympic Games.

Although she did not qualify, Andrea Holt did justice to her role as England champion - she reached the third and final stages after beating Europe No.12 Asa Svensson, but losing the crucial one to Mirjam Hooman of Holland, 16, 14, 17. Had she beaten Hooman, the girl from Bury would have been through to Barcelona.

So, after four days toil at the Palasport, and a nightmare journey to get there, Syed, Lomas and Gordon will join Carl Preat in Barcelona as the four to represent Great Britain.

Since Bolzano of course, the British Olympians can number six, as Alan Cooke and Carl Preat qualified for the mens doubles in Gdansk and for the womens doubles Andrea Holt and Lisa Lomas were also qualifiers.

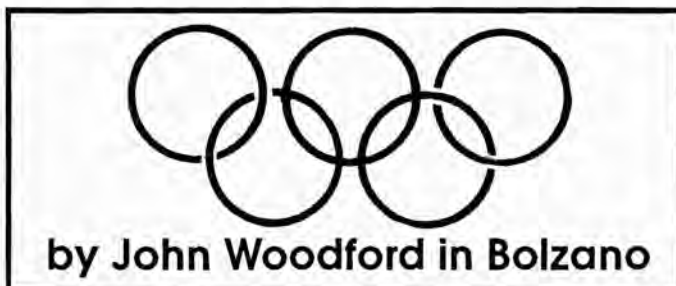
Fogbound in Milan

Why Milan airport, some 200 miles from the venue at Bolzano? Good question. Verona was quoted as the official airport of entry, but that is an airport mainly devoted to summer charter flights. The nearest airport was Innsbruck, the other side of the Brenner Pass in Austria, so the Italians were not likely to suggest that landing ground.

The British party were declined transport from Milan and given train times, changing at Verona! But Chairman Alan Ransome and Don and Jill Parker had better ideas - they hired a mini-bus and a car to get the party to Bolzano.

The fun started when Chairman Ransome found his hire-car parked too close to the next vehicle and had to enter by the boot! With Jill driving I was in the mini-bus trying to claw its way out of the Milan rush-hour traffic and up country onto the motorways. Down came the fog. At times, visibility was less than ten yards with no "cats-eyes".

Losing our way once and the limited visibility, cost both British vehicles at least one-and-a-half hours



by John Woodford in Bolzano



Matthew Syed

delay. Eventually, the fog cleared and with Don Parker driving we arrived in Bolzano. With hotels being sorted at the venue we arrived at the hall after chasing round the town for half-an-hour only to find the organisers gone home. However, a note left on the door, told us our hotel and around midnight, things began to improve. Not however, for the Lithuanian team who after two days driving in a ramshackle coach of ancient vintage found themselves without a hotel.

Luckily, with the prospect of another night on the coach looming, the Lithuanians were spotted by an Italian official, who guided them to a hotel.

Each of the British players had their own coach, which although it sounds a luxury, for a prize as important as a ticket to the Olympic Games, it proved an invaluable move. Alan Cooke was coached court-side by Don Parker, Matthew Syed by Desmond Douglas, Lisa Lomas by Jill Parker, Alison Gordon by Derrick Marples and Andrea Holt by the chairman himself.

After a day devoted to rest, practice and pep-talks by Don Parker, battle commenced. Syed started with some hesitation, but

finally overcame the powerful Swiss No.1 Thierry Miller 20 in the fifth. Later, he completely foxed the youngish Italian, Nannoni 12, 9, 9.

Disaster struck early for Alan Cooke. He went down -21, -18, -19 to the young, slim Slovenian Robert Smrekar, whose speedy approach took him through to the third stage. Six wins were recorded by the British women on the first day.

Cooke said after his defeat "The practice hall conditions were too hot - poor preparation for the cooler main hall, where I did not play well."

Yellow Card for Des

Des Douglas, who has never been in any serious trouble with umpires throughout his entire career, was shown the yellow card by a Dutch umpire as he coached Syed to victory over Nannoni - apparently Des was alleged to have "signalled" a short service.

During the opening days of the tournament, Alan Ransome was still battling with traffic police and other forms of "yellow peril" in the streets of Bolzano where parking all over the pavements is normal.

After a "battle" with a lady policeman in a one-way street, he returned later to find his hire-car in

the air on a crane, being taken away for parking in a restricted area. Recovery cost was £30!

On the second day, a further misfortune struck Alan Cooke, when he lost to Qian Qianli (Austria) for the third time in a row. Ironically, the Derbyshire top-spinner's record against a bunch of top Chinese players is first-class, but Qian is a problem for him.

Meanwhile, with Cooke's chances of winning through ebbing away, Syed lifted his game, laced with back-spin, but also with some stunning aggression, defeated the German No.2 Stefan Fetzner 19, -11, 18, 21.

"Speedy" Fetzner did not really get into top gear against the Syed backspin. Our girls kept winning, except for Andrea Holt who lost in five to Gordana Perkucin. Meanwhile Lisa Lomas, destined to finish second and almost first on the last day, overcame the chunky Kristina Nagy (Hungary) 18, 12, -15, 11.

This meant that Great Britain had four players through to the second stage, all except Alan Cooke, who accepted his defeat with dignity and spent the rest of the tournament urging on his team-mates.

Also with the team was England No.8 Sean Gibson whose task was to act as a playing partner for the team, another successful, if slightly luxurious arrangement.

Alison Gordon was having some escapes in the middle of the tournament. She lost the first two games to Fatima Isanovic, a flashy hitter, but the Reading professional, now based in Scotland, hauled her way back to win the fifth game 11 and then finished the day with a special win over Sweden's Marie Svensson.

The third day, saw the three Britons battling on. Lisa Lomas had to draw on her big guns to defeat the former European champion Flura Bulatova 3-1 with expedite rules engaged.

At that stage, Andrea Holt lost 3-0 to Olga Nemes and Alison Gordon went down to Italy's Alessia Arisi, but neither loss was critical.

Crucial Stage

At the end of the second stage, Syed needed to beat powerful Philippe Saive from Belgium, to qualify. In a tremendous battle of quality, the Oxford student's back-spin finally destroyed Saive 16 in the fifth, a result that prevented Saive from accompanying his brother to Barcelona, at least in the singles tournament.

The schedule was at times punishing, four best-of-five games in a day, with travelling to hotel for mid-day meals was really too much. However, the British team came through the stamina test with honours as Syed secured another smart win - 16, 17, 14, 17 against Zolt Harcsi of Hungary and Andrea Holt lost to Valentina Popova.

EUROPEAN ZONE QUALIFICATION TOURNAMENT - 2

Syed's four wins in stage two completed on the third day, assured him of winning his Barcelona ticket, leaving all four Britons to fight for play-off places in the final stages.

Alison Gordon lost to Elena Timina in four games and Andrea went out to Hooman. But Alison's loss late in the earlier stage left her with a game and a half against Popova, with the winner Barcelona bound and the loser without a singles ticket.

In one of the most stirring duels in Bolzano, Alison was almost down and out, losing 15-20 in the fifth game to Popova, but suddenly the former twice-European champion cracked - Alison swarmed in, drawing on all her experience and fighting powers to win 22-20, a Barcelona ticket so unexpected.

The smiling British winner said "I did not expect to even be picked to come here, so to get a ticket to Barcelona is almost unbelievable."

At the last day, the final hours of the tournament were taken up by an expedite battle between Bulatova and Lisa Lomas, playing for first and second place.

Lisa created a magnificent 19-11 lead in the final game, but suddenly lost her concentration. Her attacking shots missed their target and after four days of truly magnificent play, lost 21.

To concentrate for four days and only lose out in the final few minutes, deserved the champagne celebrations that followed that evening at the farewell party.

The 5am journey back was sleepy and uneventful. The Italian organisers hearing of the appalling journey for the Britons from Milan, clearly tried to make amends by providing a 24-seater bus to the airport, where the two parties split into the Heathrow and Manchester flights with the feeling of a job well done.

Whilst the players who one would expect to qualify did so - Appelgren, Fetzner, Kalinic, Ding Yi etc, it is interesting to look at those who failed to qualify for the Barcelona singles - among them: Nemeth (Hungary), Nannoni (Italy), Bohm (Germany), Schlager (Austria), qian Qianli (Austria), Korbel (Czechoslovakia), Cabrera (Belgium), Chila (France), Harczy (Hungary), Saive (Belgium).

THE BARCELONA QUALIFIERS

MEN:

T. Janci (Czechoslovakia)
S. Fetzner (Germany)
M. Appelgren (Sweden)
N. Chatelain (France)
M. Syed (Great Britain)
Z. Kalinic (Yugoslavia)
Ding Yi (Austria)
I. Solopov (Estonia)
M. Shmyrev (CIS)
P. Skiersky (Poland)
A. Mazunov (CIS)
R. Vimi (Czechoslovakia)

WOMEN:

F. Bulatova (Italy)
L. Lomas (Great Britain)

E. Timina (CIS)
O. Ciosu (Romania)
A. Arisi (Italy)
G. Melnik (CIS)
E. Schalle (Germany)
O. Nemes (Germany)
L. Erlmann (Sweden)
M. Hooman (Holland)
J. Fazlic (Yugoslavia)
A. Gordon (Great Britain)

The thirteenth member of the British party in Bolzano was former Scottish chairman and British team manager Brian Christie. Officially a supporter, Brian did a great job encouraging the team, attending functions and generally oiling the wheels of diplomacy.

On the whole the organisation was reasonable. The Italians stunned the 23 journalists present on the first day when they closed the Press Centre for three hours for a siesta! After a storming

protect, especially from journalists working for agencies, that did not occur again.

RESULTS OF FINAL STAGE

MEN:

M. Appelgren b M. Syed 16, 10, -16, 18
T. Janci b Z. Kalinic -14, 18, -18, 19, 19
N. Chatelain b Ding Yi 16, -18, 15, 14
S. Fetzner b I. Solopov 18, 15, -15, -13, 24

SEMI-FINALS:

Janci bt Appelgren 17, 19, 19
Fetzner b Chatelain 18, 10 -20, 8

FINAL:

Janci b Fetzner -14, -13, 16, 13, 11

WOMEN:

F. Bulatova b G. Melnick -20, -14, 14, 20, 16
E. Ciosu b E. Schalle 15, 22, -15, 15
E. Timina b O. Nemes -12, 9, 20, 17
L. Lomas b Arisa 17, 14, 15

SEMI-FINALS:

Bulatova b Ciosu 19, 15, 22
Lomas b Timina -9, -20, 22, 17, 18

FINAL:

Bulatova b Lomas -19, -19, 19, 19, 21

Why Bolzano?

● It took me two days to discover why the Italians had chosen a venue a huge distance from a major airport.

The President of the Organising Committee was an imposing lady - Edith Huber Santifaller - well known in Italian Table Tennis politics.

Her home town is Bolzano

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Sealed at six

AT 6.00pm on Sunday 23rd February NFD (No Fear of Defeat?) Grove secured the League top spot against formidable resistance from second-placed Team Peniel. The match score was levelled four times before Grove secured their two points. Team Peniel led 3-1 as Matt Syed beat Nicky Mason, Steve Dorking beat Michael O'Driscoll and John Holland beat Jonathan Taylor. Des Douglas remained untouchable and Grove convincingly recorded two valuable doubles victories. Sean Gibson also beat Nicky Mason but the ultimate shock came when Michael O'Driscoll beat the England No.3 Matt Syed to gain the 'POM' Award (Player of the Match) and turn things in NFD Grove's favour. Final score 8-6.

Ellenborough I secured two valuable points, beating Yugo Cars 8-5 to hold 4th place. Graham Sandley was the only player to remain unbeaten on the day with Colin Wilson and Euan Walker gaining two wins each. Confederation Life St. Neats came close to swapping places with Bathwick Tyres at the foot of the table. Stuart Palmer won his three while Keith Richardson's games all went to three but he only beat Alex Perry 19, -19, 18. Mick Harper, ranked 89 in the country, chipped in a win over Paul Giles, ranked 30. Doubles were shared and all this left Adrian Moore to complete 3 wins with a 19, -19, 18 victory over Keith Richardson to make the match score 8-6.

Lincoln safe?

The battle is still on for the runners-up spot in **Division 1 North**. Andy Edmonds helped Well Connected Menswear to a 5-3 win over West Warwickshire. He beat Trevor Washington -16, 19, 19 and Barrie Russ 9 and 3. Barry Johnson beat Adrian Pilgrim and Graem McKim to reinforce his Top 50 ranking. Darren Howarth helped Vymura International to a 6-2 win over Norwich Foxwood with victories against Andrew Hawes and Neil Pickard. Ruston Marconi Lincoln flexed their muscles and totally dominated Liverpool. Lee Neil led the way to 8-0 by beating Neil Gravener and Paul Hutchings.

At the Abersychan Leisure Centre Colley Toyota virtually secured the top spot in **Division 1 South** by beating DML White Hart Launceston 6-2. Paul Whiting convincingly beat Dave Barr but he was brought back down to earth by Steve Ward. England No.5 veteran Mike Short just lost to Brian Jeanes -18, 19, -20. Horsham Dolphins failed to capitalise on this result by losing 3-5 to Larkhall, the Sussex side trailed 1-5 as Ritchie Venner beat Dave Harding but lost -20, 19, -19 to Mike Hammond. Ellenborough II hover just over the foot of the table having lost 3-5 to Bathwick Tyres II. Maximums from Andy Creed and Diccon Gray decided the outcome.

Stephens NYSD look unstoppable, despite close shaves, in **Division 2 North**. They beat Borough of Sunderland 5-3 with two games lost at deuce in the third by Tim Dyson i.e. -17, 17, -21 to Ian Collier and -9, 20, -23 to Stephen George. It was Mick Stead who showed the way with convincing wins against Dave Godbold and Mark Christie.

Cars crash

Sally Marling was the Player of the Match as Bribar Humberside whitewashed Yugo Cars II. She



Michael O'Driscoll (left) and Sally Marling

thrashed Julian Tee 10 and 6 and squeezed past Ian Brown 15, -11, 19. City of Leeds stayed at the bottom by losing 3-5 to Burslem. Mark Evans kept Burslem on the road with wins over David Indriks and Richard Smith. Chan Construction's progress was halted by City of Leicester who beat them 5-3. Mark Illingsworth starred with wins against Steve Bertie and Phil Gunn.

Division 2 South West leaders Kleinwort Benson Gillingham gratefully took two points from Gunnersbury Triangle. Keld Jaksland took a game from Juliet Houghton while Norman Swift took 40 points from Paul Rainsford, but this was the closest they could get. Edison crashed 2-6 to Cheltenham Saracens. Darren Griffin showed some bottle beating Clive Carthy -18, 18, 22 and David Goode 20, 9, 19. Horsham Dolphins II upset the form book by beating Amity Generation Fareham 5-3. Roger Chandler turned the match by beating Mark Bleakley and Graham Toole. Colley Toyota II and White Hart Launceston II recorded the same result as their first teams. Lee Thomas fared well in beating Steve Giles and Jeremy Williams to help achieve this 6-2 win for the Welsh.

Fellows Cranleigh went to Fareham to share the points in **Division 2 South East**. Steve Cowley beat Nigel Thomas 16 and 17 but lost to Miki Sinanan 19, -16, -16. Mark Wicker beat Steve Mills and Graham Lynch, and Linda Radford beat the latter to salvage a point. Rejects led BSG Brentwood 2-0 with Jerome Jonah beating Richard Darnell. However the Essex side rattled off the next six with Stephen Rand winning impressively against Alan Cole and Simon Phillips. City of Milton Keynes retained their place at the top of the table with a 5-3 against Leckie. Adrian Thorpe resisted with wins over the Bowler brothers. Jill Harris could not quite get things to go her way as she lost to John Burleton -12, 16, -16 and Peter Bowler -17, 17, -20.

Tony Clayton was once again PoM for Jolliffe Poole only to see his team lose again, this time 3-5 to Pillinger Air Croydon. He beat Martin Lowe 4 and 19 and Phil Cox 22 and 16. Barry Hill almost enabled them to share the points but he lost to Henry Buist 18, -19, -21.

Promising Shaw

Vale Royal Warrington took no chances with Uxbridge Burton, in **Division 3 North**, beating them 7-1. Steve Shaw, identified as "a most promising player" took some consolation in beating Peter Flint although he could not quite cope with Malcolm McEvoy. Vymura International II beat Lifeline Developments Crusaders Lincoln by the same margin. This time it was the turn of Paul Moore to take consolation in beating Howard Whewell. Umpire John Burwell was clearly impressed with the "Highest standards of behaviour and sportsmanship" between the two teams.

Kinghurst Bribar stayed at the foot of the table having lost 3-5 at Newton Aycliffe to Stephens

PAY UP OR ELSE!!

League entry forms for 1992/93 should by now have been submitted to Keith Ponting. Do not forget - if your fees have not been paid by 31st May 1992 you **WILL BE** excluded from the League next season.



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BRITISH LEAGUE - 2

NYSD. Darren Lindley kept the home team in command with wins over Neil Cole and Pat McCable. John Crawford lost both his games at 11-21 in the third, having won both of his first games 21-19. Borough of Sunderland remained in the running for promotion with a 6-2 win against Ormesby. Steven Brunskill provided the most resistance by beating Malcolm Lusk and Toni Gelder. Dave Robson was firing on all cylinders beating Stuart Miller 12 and 9 and Andrew Wilkinson -19, 7, 7.

At the other end of the country Linda Farrow were beating Ashford (Middlesex) 6-2 in **Division 3 South**. Duncan "guess what's coming next" Taylor got his moneys worth beating Andy Shepherd 19, -19, 18 and England No. 107 Neil Charles 11, -5, 20. Rejects II sneaked back up to third place with a 7-1 beating of Alpha Southampton. Andrew Ely beat Peter Harry while Tony Catt recorded a near miss against Steve Carpenter, losing 17, -14, -19. Scott Greenbrook and Jason Blake dominated. JAGS stayed three points clear at the top as they beat White Hart Launceston 6-2 (WHL's favourite score of the weekend!). Selwyn Campbell beat J. May and A. Vincent although the latter beat Derek Holman. Matthew Brown

did well for NFD Grove IV against Parkside Dragons at Newport. He beat L. Collier and Byron Davies to help Grove to a 6-2 win and further consolidate their mid-table position.

Pensioners day out?

Down at the foot of **Division 3 East** BSG Brentwood II beat Ellenborough III 6-2 as Ryan Savill beat Charles Smith and Dipak Topiwala. Two wins were also chipped in by BSG's Ben Ware. In "An afternoon for the Vets". Team Peniel caught up with Fellows Cranleigh by beating them 5-3. The Pom was John Tendler who beat Alison Gower and Keith Buers.

Levi's Westfield sit on top of the division following a 5-3 win over Britannia Ipswich despite the inclusion of Richard Tanner who beat Ian Hawes and Kieron Dabbs. It was Andy Trott and Richard Elliott who provided a stronger bottom half for Levi's to secure two points.

Chelmsford League trailed 1-3 against Norwich Foxwood before clawing their way back for a 5-3 win. Rik James led with victories against Sean Molloy and Trevor Bunn. Towards the end Steve Kerns came good with a -22, 12, 19 win over Sean Molloy and, in the last game, Neil

Butcher beat Pat McLoughan 10, -16, 18.

Ashford victory

OLOP cling on to top spot in **Division 3 Midland** by beating the Lambeth 4 Tops 2-6. Tjani Addo took one game and Mihana Akajajbo the other, both against Martin O'Donovan. Clive Payne convincingly beat Tony Curtis and Javad Ameri to take a commanding lead. Just one game behind, in second place, Chan Construction beat Thorns Dudley 6-2. Julian Wootton took consolation in beating Matthew Harvey and Andrew Hare from the no.4 spot. Lindon Douglas set the course beating Ken Walton and Mark Brookes. Bathwick Tyres burst a surprise on NFD Grove Colts beating them 6-2 too. Eddie Roofe started well beating Trevor Mangin and then secured the points with a win over Adrian Cadman. The latter just beat Claire Hunter -18, 19, 23. Ashford (Kent) chalked up their first win at the expense of an unsuspecting Larkhall II. Kent no. 2 Justin Goodall took his traditional two backed up by Andy Chapman who beat Surrey's Richard Tanner -18, 20, 20 and then Frank Hams 15, -8, 19 for a 5-1 lead. Phil Saxby beat Steve Davis but lost to the evergreenish Gordon Chapman -22, -21.

LEAGUE TABLES AS AT 23rd FEBRUARY 1992

PREMIER	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS	DIVISION 2 (SOUTH WEST)	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
NFD Grove I	10	10	0	0	80	16	20	K B Gillingham	10	7	3	0	59	21	17
Team Peniel I	10	8	0	2	73	24	16	Edison	10	7	2	1	51	29	16
Yugo Cars I	10	5	0	5	52	58	10	Cheltenham Saracens	10	6	3	1	49	31	15
Ellenborough I	9	3	1	5	37	58	7	Amity Gen. 2 Fareham	10	5	1	4	45	35	11
Bathwick Tyres I	9	2	0	7	31	67	4	Horsham Dolphins II	10	4	1	5	41	39	9
Con Life St Neots	10	0	1	9	29	79	1	Colley Toyota II	10	4	0	6	36	44	8
								DML Launceston II	10	2	0	8	30	50	4
								Gunnersbury Triangle	10	0	0	10	9	71	0
DIVISION 1 (NORTH)															
NFD Grove II	8	8	0	0	54	10	16	DIVISION 3 (NORTH)							
Well Connected Menswear	9	4	3	2	43	30	11	Vale Royal Warrington	10	8	2	0	62	18	18
Vymura International I	9	5	1	3	37	35	11	Borough of Sunderland II	10	7	2	1	46	34	16
West Warwickshire	8	4	0	4	33	31	8	Vymura International II	10	7	1	2	53	27	15
Liverpool	8	3	0	5	24	40	6	Stephens NYSD II	10	4	2	4	41	39	10
RM Lincoln	9	1	3	5	30	42	5	Uxbridge (Burton)	10	4	2	4	38	42	10
Norwich Foxwood I	9	1	1	6	20	52	3	Ormesby	10	3	2	5	38	42	8
Britannia Ipswich							Resigned	L D Crusaders	10	0	2	8	20	60	2
								Kinghurst Bribar	10	0	1	9	22	58	1
DIVISION 1 (SOUTH)															
Colley Toyota I	10	8	2	0	61	19	18	DIVISION 3 (EAST)							
DML Launceston I	10	6	2	2	43	37	14	Levis Westfield	10	6	1	3	47	33	13
Horsham Dolphins I	10	5	3	2	52	28	13	Chelmsford League	10	6	1	3	44	36	13
Bathwick Tyres II	10	5	2	3	43	37	12	Britannia Ipswich Ii	10	4	4	2	45	35	12
NFD Grove III	9	4	1	4	38	34	9	Fellows Cranleigh II	10	5	1	4	46	34	11
Larkhall I	10	3	2	5	31	49	8	Team Peniel II	10	5	1	4	40	40	11
Ellenborough II	10	1	1	8	27	53	3	Norwich Foxwood II	10	4	2	4	42	38	10
VP Mazda	9	0	1	8	17	55	1	Ellenborough III	10	2	1	7	28	52	5
								BSG Brentwood II	10	2	1	7	28	52	5
DIVISION 2 (NORTH)															
Stephens NYSD I	10	10	0	0	61	19	20	DIVISION 3 (MIDLAND)							
Chan Construction I	10	5	3	2	50	30	13	OLOP TTC	10	8	2	0	55	25	18
Bribar Humberside	10	5	2	3	45	35	12	Chan Construction II	10	8	2	0	54	26	18
City of Leicester	10	4	2	4	46	34	10	NFD Grove Colts	10	5	2	3	37	35	12
Yugo Cars II	10	3	2	5	32	48	8	Larkhall II	10	4	2	4	40	40	10
Burslem	10	2	3	5	30	50	7	Bathwick Tyres III	10	4	1	5	39	41	9
Borough of Sunderland	10	2	2	6	31	49	6	Thorns Dudley	10	4	0	6	41	39	8
City of Leeds	10	1	2	7	25	55	4	Lambeth 4 Tops	10	1	1	8	20	52	3
								Ashford (Kent)	10	1	0	9	26	54	2
DIVISION 2 (SOUTH EAST)															
City of Milton Keynes	10	8	1	1	48	32	17	DIVISION 3 (SOUTH)							
BSG Brentwood I	10	6	3	1	49	31	15	JAGS SC	10	9	0	1	61	19	18
Fellows Cranleigh I	10	5	2	3	43	37	12	Linda Farrow	10	7	1	2	53	27	15
Pillinger Air Croydon	10	4	2	4	42	38	10	Rejects II	10	5	2	3	44	36	12
VRS Fareham	10	3	2	5	38	42	8	Ashford (Middlesex)	10	4	4	2	40	40	12
Rejects I	10	3	2	5	37	43	8	NFD Grove IV	10	4	2	4	37	43	10
Leckie TTC	10	2	3	5	35	45	7	Parkside Dragons	10	3	1	6	28	44	7
Jolliffe Poole	10	0	3	7	28	52	3	White Hart Launceston III	10	2	1	7	32	48	5
								Alpha Southampton	10	0	1	9	17	55	1

A piece of cake

RICHARD HYACINTH and KATE GOODHALL followed on from their Junior National Championship wins, by winning their respective singles in the Essex Junior 2 Star tournament, on Sunday 1st, March 1992.

The Junior Girls Singles was "a piece of cake" for Kate Goodhall, she was in a class of her own, and no one caused her to slip into top gear, they tried but the nearest to her was C. Brown who lost in the Second Round 15 and 19. Kate took the title by beating L. Heyward 15 and 11 in the final.

The Junior Boys Singles, brought about some red faces from fancied players, as first C. Sladden, the no. 3 seed went out to R. Powell 8, -14, 22. Chris was 19-14 down in the final game and fought back to lead 20-19, and then at 21-20 down, a return from Powell hit the net and trickled over. R. Hyacinth fought his way through to the semi final, where he met Powell and although there was good attacking play on both sides the top seed coasted home 17 and 12. No. 7 seed D. Blake reached the semi final without losing a game and kept true to form by convincingly beating no. 5 seed D. Forster 15 and 11. The final was brilliantly fought out with both Blake and Hyacinth attacking strongly from way behind the base line. Hyacinth eventually came good 16 and 17 and closed Saturday's play.

Once again Harlow Sports Centre was the chosen venue for the Essex Junior Tournament, and an entry of about 300 youngsters was expected. Top seed in the Junior Boys, Alex Perry failed to arrive for reasons unknown and a number of top girl juniors were involved in the Ladies British League matches.

There were no surprises in the Junior Section of the Boys and Girls groups, and both sections progressed together with the doubles to the latter stages before screams of anguish and yells of disbelief signalled another prospect biting the dust.

The Junior Girls Doubles, was easily won by the very competent Kate Goodhall and Shelly Ruocco, without losing a game, they took the title by punishing L. Heyward and J. Coleman, 11 and 11 in the final, not that the losers didn't put up a good fight, they just found it difficult to win points.

The Junior Boys Doubles, was very fiercely contested, D. Appleton and R. Hyacinth, the top seeds dropped a game in their semi final against B. Forster and R. Powell, while the other semi final had C. Sladden and D. Blake coasting home against T. O'Leary and K. Flowerday 18 and 12. The final was a cracker,



Richard Hyacinth (left) and Kate Goodhall

fierce hitting by all four one minute and delicate touches the next helped by some unforced errors from their opponents, Hyacinth and Flowerday took the first 21-17. This inspired Sladden and Blake, who really exerted the pressure and even though they took the final games 13 and 13, the rallies were long and furious.

Sunday saw the Cadets and under 12's in action and we were entertained throughout the day with very high class matches.

The under 12's Girls Singles, offered no surprises as the no. 1 and 2 seeds, T. Davies and D. Pestka won through to the final. Pestka had a shock though when no. 4 seed L. Thornton put up a great fight in a very enjoyable match the top seed just scraping home - 17, 19, 19.

The Under 12's Boys Singles brought about many surprises, No. 1 seed A. Sublian lost in the semi final to S. Friday in a really hectic match with both players chasing every ball in the first two games, but the final game saw Friday hit a magic spell to ease home 21-15, 16.

No. 2 seed C. Thompson also went out in the semi final to G. Ashison, once again after a very close match, the score 18, -17, 18 to Ashison.

The final was a classic with both the lads giving their all. The spectators were applauding point after point as every ball was hit with venom and every return meticulously placed. It was a shame that there had to be just one winner, for both players did table tennis proud. S. Friday finally powered to the title and it could hardly have been closer 19 - 18, 20.

The Cadet Girls Doubles saw the no. 2 seed K. Woodward and N. Smith, going out in the semi final by 15, -19, 17 to N. Massingham and J. Bush-Harris once again in a closely fought match that could have gone either way. The event was won by S. Ruocco and G. Ashison 20 and 15 who came through without conceding a game.

The Cadet Boys Doubles was very easy for the no. 1 pairing of V. Avery and S. Lampkin up to the final, only one game reaching double figures. The other finalists no. 2 seeds M. James and D. Purdy, also had an easy path, not dropping a game but the final was very different. In the first game the top seeds seemed to have things under control until they lapsed into a complacency that lost them a succession of points before pulling themselves back and winning 22-20. The second game followed the same pattern with Avery and Lampkin just keeping in front until the midway stage and then Purdy and James won the next 6 points with forceful attacking shots. The no. 1 seeds once again managed to gain control and took the game 21, 18 and the title.

The Cadet Girls Singles provided the surprises with G. Ashison playing well all day and we knew K. Woodward the top seed, would have her resources stretched, and this happened, as, playing beautiful flowing strokes, the no. 4 seed sneaked home 24-22 in the first game. Woodward really fought for supremacy in the second and brought the games score to 1-1 with a tight 22-20 victory. The exertion must have been too much for her as Ashinson took control and coasted home 21-12. S. Ruocco was having a real struggle in her matches, she was taken to 3 by T. Davies in the second round and again in the next by J. Weare. It was with tenacity that she took the first game of the semi final against N. Massingham 21-18, but she fell away and lost the next two 15 and 12. The final started with both girls fighting for every point, there were none wasted as the score rose with not more than a few points between the players, then Massingham went in front and things looked bleak for Ashinson, but she won five in a row and the game 23-21, the second was an anti-climax and Ashinson took the title with a 21-13 win.

In the Cadet Boys Singles no. 1 seed V. Avery was crushing all before him, but so too was S. Lampkin, his Doubles partner and no. 4 seed and when they met in the semi final no one would predict a winner. Both boys were in great form and some very fine rallies were played in the first game with every shot in the book coming out.

Lampkin forged in front and won 21-18. Avery came back with a vengeance and put in some storming attacks to crush his opponent 21-11 in the second. The third was vintage Table Tennis, with both players taking chances, some unnecessary, some paying off, and the score crept up with the lead regularly changing. The score reached 20-20, and both players had chances of winning before Lampkin forced his way to the final 26-24. M. James was in great form in the other half and he reached the final without conceding a game. D. Purdy in the semi-final came nearest in going down 17 and 18.

The final was something of an anti-climax, James seemed to have lost his rhythm and against an opponent playing very controlled, this was fatal. Lampkin lost no time in winning the first game 21-10, and although James rallied a little he eventually lost the second 21-16.

RESULTS

JUNIOR SINGLES

Boys:
R. Hyacinth (Mi) bt D. Blake (Sy) 16 and 17
Girls:
K. Goodall (Y) bt L. Heyward (Dv) 15 and 11

JUNIOR DOUBLES

Boys:
C. Sladden (E)/D. Blake bt D. Appleton (Ch)/R. Hyacinth -17, 13, 13
Girls:
K. Goodall/S. Ruocco (E) bt L. Heyward/J. Coleman (E) 11 and 11

CADET SINGLES

Boys:
S. Lampkin (Sy) bt M. James (Y) 10 and 16
Girls:
G. Ashinson (Sy) bt N. Massingham (Li) 21 and 13

CADET DOUBLES

Boys:
A. Avery (E)/S. Lampkin bt D. Purdy (Dy)/M. James 20 and 18
Girls:
S. Ruocco/G. Ashinson bt N. Massingham/J. Bush-Harris (Sx) 20 and 15

UNDER 12's SINGLES

Boys:
S. Friday (K) bt G. Ashinson 19, -18, 20
Girls:
D. Pestka (Ng) bt T. Davies (E) 18, -12, 9

ETTA County Supplement

AVON Bob Murray

DESPITE AN EXCELLENT season for our senior I's, it was to be the runners up spot in division 1b for the second time in three years.

Four wins from four matches at Bath in November meant they started the second series at Essex leading the division albeit on sets difference. An 8-2 win against Buckinghamshire started the weekend on a high note. Two wins each from Andy Creed, Michele Cohen and Helen Perrott were supplemented with one each from Paul Lewis and Steve Bettison.

A close encounter was always expected against Sussex II's and so it proved. Another double from Andy and two from Paul gave Avon a marginal advantage from the men's games. Michele and Helen contributed with one win each to give us an arrow 6-4 win and a maximum haul from 6 matches.

The championship decider against Essex on the Sunday was unfortunately to be an anti-climax. Despite an outstanding win by Andy over Grant Solder, to personally cap a fine weekend performance, the inclusion of Skylet Andrew in the Essex side proved decisive and resulted in a 9-1 defeat for Avon.

County Schools

It will be the Holmead under 11 Boys and under 11 Girls who will provide Avon's interest in the English Schools Championships at Leigh Green.

The boys squad of James Barker, Leigh Iles, Matthew Loughran, Brian Smith, Paul Hynam and Mark Hahn will be joined by Lizzie McDonald, Jessica Orlik, Clare Smythe, Katie Worlock and Sara Prewett and there are high hopes of a Holmead double celebration.

The Brislington under 13 and under 16 Boys teams were unfortunate to come up against very strong Grove Squads but they can also be well satisfied with their performances.

Bath League

Chris Bridges, Michele Cohen and Marc Cotton carried off the major titles at the Bath Closed Championships and added new names to all three trophies.

Bridges of Longwell Green was in great form to beat his clubmate, and Avon No 6, Gary Baldwin in the final. But Chris had been extended the full distance in an exciting semi-final against Michele Cohen, also of Longwell Green.

Michele however was never seriously troubled in taking her first Bath title when she ran out a comfortable winner in the final of the Anchor Cup against Dina Stanley.

Gary Baldwin also found himself in the runners-up position in the men's singles final for the Williams Cup, this time surprisingly going down two games to one to Marc Cotton of Oldfield Park. There has never been any doubt concerning Marc's ability, he is a natural. In this tournament he was able to control his suspect temperament and emerged a worthy winner.

Gary had some revenge in the final of the men's doubles for the Russell Cup when he teamed up with Mike Bridgman to beat Cotton and Chris Holley in straight games. But Holley had to be content with another runners-up award when he and Dina Stanley went down in straight games to Mike Bridgman and Michele Cohen in the finals of the mixed doubles for the Hillier Rose Bowl. The final of the Veteran's singles was fought out between Mike Oxley and John Higgs, Oxley prevailing in straight games. Both players also appeared in the Veterans doubles final where Oxley and Roy Smith beat Higgs and Paul Ethington.

Bristol League

Both Bristol's cadet sides are still going strong in their national competitions. In the Leach Cup, maximums from Graham Long, Tom Orlik and Ross McDonald gave Bristol a 9-0 victory over Guildford and they now progress to the semi final stage where they will face South West Sussex.

A solid, all round performance from Jessica Orlik, Lizzie McDonald and Rachel Rosewell gave them a 6-3 win over Reading and they also now look forward to the semi-finals of the Hammersley Cup when they will face Maidstone at home.

Despite a double from Michele Cohen, the Bristol Ladies team could not repeat last season's heroics and they eventually went down 5-2 to Plymouth.

The top of the Bristol premier has a familiar look about it with Nailsea Leopards holding a clear advantage from Knowle & Brislington 'A', Bristol Club 'B' and BAWA Brigands.

Weston Super Mare League

The first division title race in Weston is as it could possibly be with four teams in serious contention as March approaches.

The second division leading places see Musketeers holding a big lead over Bleadon Youth Club and Winscombe Slashers.

The Weston coaching programme continues to flourish. Bill Lavis regularly has up to 50 attending his weekly session at Worle School whilst promising youngsters are showing their paces at other schemes run at the YMCA and local schools. Sunday April 12th has been pencilled in for the annual championships although a venue has still to be confirmed.

BERKSHIRE John Cunningham

BERKSHIRE CAN BE proud of Alison Gordon and Matthew Syed who have been selected for the Olympic Games this year. The Royal County could well have two more in the next Olympics with Ali Subhan and Gemma Schwartz showing steady improvement, together with a whole host of promising youngsters, not least of these being ten year old Susan Johnson.

Bracknell

There were some new names at the Bracknell Closed this year. Cedric Dias caused a major surprise when he won the individual handicap at the expense of junior Caroline Goatley. The pair produced a great three set final and left many top scalps behind, as Dias won his first major title.

Roger Woolven Allen landed a double, taking the Premier individual title and the coveted Veterans trophy. Two of our top players met in the final of the men's singles and Paul Savins together with Tony Duffield, produced a final of which the league can be proud. Duffield, last year's winner, looked to be on his way to victory in the third set. However Savins produced several devastating backhands to take the 1992 title. Perhaps the most unlucky player was Michael Childs who fell to Savins in the semi final. He also came second in the men's doubles and mixed doubles.

The Howard Shield team handicap has reached the last eight stage and has produced some close encounters as usual, the closest in the last round being a four point win in the final game of the evening as with only one point in it, Tony Bucknell held on to beat Mike Stickland, 21-18 in the first to level the match and 21-16 in the second to pull four points clear, and put OLOP into the last eight.

Maidenhead

Castle Hill's Robert Mathews stole the show at the Berkshire Association for Young People's table tennis championship at the Bulmersh Sports Centre. He lifted the Colts singles title and now goes to represent Berkshire in the Regional Finals at Winchester. In the earlier group matches Daniel Webber, also of Castle Hill, won all his four matches, one against Mathews. However, in the final the tables were turned with Mathews' winning. Philip Davies, who lost to Mathews in the semi final, and Webber, go forward to the finals to represent Berkshire in the Colts doubles event.

In the senior league Castle Hill teams head the Premier, First, Second and Third divisions.

Reading

Graham Kendall, who is editor of Table Tennis Reading has just published his new-look newsletter. It must be one of the best produced in the country with several good reports, letters to the editor and a whole host of useful information. Well done Graham and his divisional reporters. On the league front Sonning Common and Peppard lead divisions 1 and 2 while OLOP D are well clear in division 3.

Next month a report on the Reading Closed. On the school front St Andrews have reached the Dunlop National Team Championship finals. Their Under 13 boys have swept all before them and two are actually flying back from a Rugby tour in order to play. Best of luck lads.

Counties 2

CORNWALL Denzil Penberthy

THE DOMESTIC SEASON in Cornwall is now well advanced and championship issues are already beginning to take shape in Cornwall's three affiliated leagues.

The North Cornwall League, although not too strong in numbers these days, is certainly strong in playing ability at the moment with a number of county ranked players currently competing. Launceston Liberal club currently set the pace with 88 points but both Metherell and Bride are not too far behind with games in hand. Bude are currently benefiting from the services of John Thorpe and Jonathon Maggs whilst Metherell can now call on Plymouth League players Mike Griggs and Gary Marquard to boost their challenge.

In Mid-Cornwall Siblyback are the first Division leaders with a 13 point lead over St Austell Slades. Mevagsissey, who are a strong side on their day, look to have left it too late for this season anyway.

The West Cornwall Premier still boasts the highest playing standards in the county, despite the unfortunate withdrawal of a leading club in St Ives A. This has meant that their No. 1 player John Bassett has had to drop down into Division 1 playing for the B team. The battle for the Premier Division title will be fought out by Lanner, Camborne, Redruth and Falmouth with Lanner looking to have the strongest overall team on paper. Their No. 1 player, Graham Reed, is still proving to be a very difficult player to beat. Camborne are doing well to hold on to 2nd place.

It has been a quiet spell on the county match front with no matches taking place of late. There has been some British League activity though involving DML White Hart Launceston's three teams. Sadly the first team's promotion challenge to the Premier has all but diminished following an away defeat at Colley Pontypool and a draw at Horsham Dolphins.

The second and third teams will be aiming to consolidate mid table positions for the remainder of the season with the onus now looking towards 1992/3 for Launceston. The draw for the semi finals of the Cornwall Senior Cup has taken place and is as follows:

Camborne A v Falmouth Docks A

Lanner A v Camborne B or Falmouth Docks B

Two important dates fast approaching are the County Closed to be played at Bodmin Tennis Centre over the weekend of 11/12th April and the Tamar Cup at Mevagsissey on 2nd May between old rivals Cornwall and Devon. Last year's corresponding fixture drew in a crowd of over 100 spectators and it is hoped that this year's fixture will be equally well supported.

DERBYSHIRE Malcolm Allsop

SEVENTEEN YEAR OLD Stephen Shaw followed up his triumph in the Derbyshire Closed Championships by winning the Class 2 singles title at the Yorkshire 2 Star Open at Huddersfield. His wins in this event, plus those in the men's singles before going out to Steve Slater, should propel him up the ranking list and reward his enthusiasm.

In Division 1 of the Burton League, Stretton Social Club Red and Uttoxeter OM A are fighting neck and neck for the title, with last season's champions RS Sherpa Orange waiting for a slip from the leaders but with a backlog of fixtures to catch up.

In Division 2 Granville Kings have virtually ensured winning the division, leaving Trancher and Hill Street Red to fight out the runners-up position.

The Derby League could have new champions coming from outside the city for the first time with Long Eaton 1st, Castle Donington 1st and Long Eaton 2nd all challenging in a keen title race with St Andrews.

Derby High School 3rd look to win the Division 1 title, with Spondon Asterdale 1st marooned at the bottom of the division. The rest of the division is so close that the remaining teams are all in the promotion race and relegation danger! In Division 2 the consistency of Mechanics 3rd has opened up a slight lead over Long Eaton 3rd who have the advantage of the division's top player Derek Clarke.

Castle Donington 4th have completely dominated Division 3, while Derby High School 8th should finish the season as Division 4 champions.

DEVONSHIRE John Vincent

GRAHAM MAY AND Bob Goodall are making excellent progress after their heart by-pass operations. Graham had a double and Bob a quadruple. On behalf of all the County players and officials, we wish them a full and speedy recovery.

The Plymouth League Division 1 is probably the strongest division in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset. The divisional table and averages of the top 10 players at the halfway stage of the season are as follows:

Team	Points
Underground Hair	111
Global Sports A	95
Intercity A	95
Lee Mill A	92
Global Sports D	75
British Rail A	69
Global Sports C	66
Electricity B	57
Global Sports B	55
Pilgrims A	53

Player	Average
Paul Whiting	100%
Mike Short	93.9%
Gregory Bridgett	89.7%
Tony Sweet	89.7%
Adrian Vincent	87.2%
Gary Lambert	86.6%
Kevin Buddell	84.6%
Dennis Gibbs	77.7%
Martin Hussey	76.9%
Steve Giles	75.8%

In the Carter Cup competition Plymouth disappointingly lost to the strong Birmingham side by 4 games to 5. Adrian Vincent gained a maximum and Jonathan May beat Sam Barney.

On the county scene, Lynsey Heyward did very well in the Essex Junior Girls event to reach the final and finish runner-up to Kate Goodall.

The Junior County Second team had a good win over Oxfordshire and a Division 1B match in Plymouth. Devon's No. 1 David Heath and two girls Lisa Morrish and Gillian Blythe were undefeated.

Congratulations to the two Senior County teams on winning the Premier Division, a fabulous performance and the seconds retaining their place in Division 1 for next season.

Can the two Junior teams achieve the same success? The talent is there so let us hope that they produce the same commitment and team spirit as their Senior counterparts to make this an even more memorable year for Devon table tennis.

DORSET Martin Hughes

County Championships

Berkshire's misfortune could be Dorset's saviour at the end of the season when our veteran first team will know whether their most recent results have enabled them to gain promotion to the Premier Division of the County Championships for the first time in Dorset's history.

Berkshire, who were unbeaten after 4 matches, lost to Wiltshire and put Dorset back in control of their own destiny. Our team of Tony Clayton, Brian Burn, Barry Hill and Joyce Coop have been very successful with Tony and Joyce both unbeaten and they had lost their only match to Berkshire when Tony Clayton had been unavailable.

Dorset duly polished off Kent seconds 9-0 and then Wiltshire by 8-1 to leave them now needing a victory over Essex 2nds in their final match of the season to be virtually assured of promotion.

Counties 3

British League

Jolliffe Poole, sponsored by Peter Jolliffe Bookmaker, are struggling in Division 2 SE at present, languishing in 8th place with only Tony Clayton having any significant success.

With three draws and three 3-5 defeats, Jolliffe have struggled to amass many league points although they have always presented the opposition with a tough task.

ESSEX

Alan Shepherd

FEBRUARY WAS A month of triumph and disaster for the county's teams. Although I have unfortunately received no official report from my colleague Bill Wadling, I am delighted to say that our Senior squad made no mistakes in its weekend of matches in Division 1B. Victories over Middlesex II, Wiltshire and Avon by scores of 9-1, 10-0 and 9-1 preserved our unbeaten record and took us back at long last to the Premier Division. We fielded our strongest lineup for many moons, namely Skylet Andrew - how tremendous it was to see him back in an Essex shirt - Steve Dorking, Grant Solder, John Dennison, Linda Radford and Alison Gower. Congratulations to our boys and girls and we now look forward to a long tenure in the top flight.

That is the good news, now for the bad. According to Doug Moss in the February edition Essex Junior 2nd team 'seem invincible'. Well, I am quite sure that he made an accurate assessment, but he was not aware that against Glamorgan we would be without Vincent Avery, Wayne Mitchell and Jenny Coleman, whilst against Kent were minus Avery, Coleman and Sarah Gardner. No team of five players can expect to continue winning when at less than half strength and we duly lost both those matches. Why we did not have the players mentioned is something which is the subject of an investigation by the Management Committee and I do not feel that it would be right for me to comment. What I will say is that I am devastated by the collapse of our title aspirations in Junior Division 1B and feel deep sympathy for boys such as Ben Ware and Peter Worthington, who have been available for every match and have played their hearts out for Essex. They really deserved those championship trophies.

For reasons which once more I do not wish to discuss, I was forced to register two young girl players, previously not even on our ranking list (which went down to 15). These were Laura Bawden of Southend, just 14, and the daughter of former Essex junior Andrew Bawden and Nikki Kennard of Thurrock, also 14. I took five boys and two girls to play Norfolk I and II at Norwich as the Essex junior third team, hitherto unbeaten, but now fielding one reserve boy (no Daniel Yardy) and a completely reserve girl department one of whom, Nikki, had never played a county match before in her life. Although a creditable 9-1 win over Norfolk II was achieved, their first team was just too strong for our depleted resources and a 3-7 loss resulted. Division 2B title disappeared along with the other one, in one afternoon. Michelle King played in both matches and won her four sets. What a reserve she is, and how about Nikki, who won three out of four, and lost only closely to the Norfolk No. 1 girl? Some sort of record was set up here, because included in the squad were no fewer than four players from the unfashionable Thurrock League, Nikki, Karl Grant, Wayne McAlear and James Wickens (otherwise known as Titch).

So I end on a happier note and look forward to travelling to Batley for the Junior Premier matches with a full strength squad and no last minute drop-outs!

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Alf Peppard

THIS BEING THE penultimate county report for the 1991/2 season, I want to cover some local aspects of table tennis that perhaps normally I would be covering in the final issue, the main reason for this of course is that I shall have four Finals's nights to report in the next issue, and that alone will almost take up my allocated space.

I am reliably informed that at long last the Cheltenham TTA now have a permanent Chairman to replace Graham Slack who resigned this position quite early in the season, the gentleman in question who has taken over the hot seat is Tony Iles, Tony represents Cheltenham on the county committee and appears to be an excellent choice, we must not however forget all the hard work that Graham Slack put in for Cheltenham during his two and a half year stint as Chairman.

Coaching

Always an important venture anywhere, and in his first season as Senior County coach, George Novoth has made great strides and indeed has worked far in excess, to what would usually be regarded "the Norm", George has over the season covered all the league's in the county and of course is Gloucester (city) coach as well, where he has been well supported by Neil Henry.

Julie Hogarth, who for several years has been highly instrumental with coaching at Newent, has I understand, momentarily handed over the reins to Peter Humble. Pete tells me that he hopes to carry on where Julie left off, Peter also helps Sten Salisbury out with regular coaching sessions on Saturday nights at the Rudford club, other coaches throughout the country are all doing their share.

Newsletter

With due regard to local news, and to current date of writing, only Stan Johnstone, Cheltenham's stalwart Editor of the Towns table tennis news magazine - Net and Edge, has really come up with a regular monthly newsletter, although I have been told that Sten Salisbury has coordinated a city newsletter early on this year, Keith Simpson plans to distribute a larger city magazine to coincide with Gloucester's finals night on 7th April.

Gloucestershire Schools TTA Championships

These took place at St Benedicts School, Cheltenham, on 23rd February, refereed by Peter Cruwys, the County Vice Chairman, and it was gratifying to note that entries maintained their usual high standards. There was an overall entry of 74 players from 21 schools, eight events in all, six tables in continuous use throughout the day's play.

Winners

U11 Boys Singles	Rob Dearing
U11 Girls Singles	Suzie Robinson
U13 Boys Singles	Aaron Mortimor
U13 Girls Singles	Kerry Hogarth
U16 Boys Singles	Peter Hayward
U16 Girls Singles	Emma Parker
U19 Boys Singles	Jeremy Hyatt
U19 Girls Singles	Angie Bristow

The Interfold Systems Gloucester TTA held their Annual Junior Championships at Oxstalls School on 26th February and had a very good entry.

Winners

U11 Boys	Rob Dearing
U13 Boys	Aaron Mortimor
U14 Girls	Ann Humble
U15 Boys	Jamie Day
U17 Girls	Ann Humble
U17 Boys	Raymond Powell

HERTFORDSHIRE

John Wood

CHESHUNT'S VETERAN INTER-LEAGUE team have once again devastated the opposition, in retaining the Hertfordshire Veterans Inter-League trophy, recently at the Barnet TTC.

Cheshunt's swashbuckling heroes were Alan Lamprell, Derek Balding, Tony Teff and Carl Nelson.

The only time their 100% record looked like going was when they faced mighty Hertford who at 3-1 in looked like bursting Cheshunt's bubble. But

Counties 4

Cheshunt's star player Derek Balding came to his side's rescue by stopping the slide when he beat Hertford's Alan Critchley 19 and 17. Carl Nelson followed this up with a fine 19 and 13 win over Phil Beeden, whilst golden oldie Alan Lamprell won the match for Cheshunt, when he narrowly defeated Dick Emerson 13, -16, 14.

The only sad note to mar the third Veteran Sunday of the season was the fact that Welwyn and Hatfield failed to field a team. Hemel Hempstead first team, who were without the services of Mick Atkinson (playing in High Wycombe Championships) and Jack Baxter (playing tennis in London) were still expected to take the runners up spot, were stopped in their tracks by, first Hertford, to whom they lost 3-4, then they went down to an even wider margin, losing 2-5 to North Herts. But Hemel did manage to win one of their three matches, beating Hereford II 5-2 with Hemel's Mick Chandler winning both his singles.

North Herts, who were laying in third position after the second Sunday, jumped over Hemel to take the runners-up spot. Making a name for North Herts were three sprightly gentlemen, Bob Wilson, John Jeffs and Roy Whiffin.

ISLE OF WIGHT John Prean

OUR CADETS HAVE done it! They won the Hampshire Inter-Town U14 Championship when they defeated Southampton 7-3, a match they had to win, as their opponents were one point ahead.

Harold Albery, the guiding spirit behind all Hampshire Junior Events as well as the hardest worker, what a charming letter to me. I quote extracts: "A tremendous result. The atmosphere was almost like a 'cup final' with almost everyone watching this particular match the IOW can be justifiably proud of their Cadets. They will do well in the future ..."

I add my own best wishes to Greg and Danny Burns and Stuart Dover, who turned the match when our boys were 3-1 down. Greg played magnificently over the three weekends with 18 wins out of 21 and Danny, at 11, must have quite a future.

I missed these great moments as I was at the 'Closed' where our man did not quite retain his title. Once again the platitude that you can't win them all triumphed. Greg Burns also won the Island Junior title, defeated Alex Rorke in the final, a strong performance by a cadet who conceded a couple of years. Alex, an improving player, has been playing particularly well in our second division and on occasional outings in our first.

Sandown took a giant step towards retaining our first division title when they defeated Wroxall 6-4. The teams are now level on points, but Sandown's games average looks better and only injuries can defeat them in the title race. Roger Hookey won all three yet again all in three games and remains the one to beat. Disappointingly few Island members made the long trip to Birmingham for the Open - a far cry from the days we sent parties of 40 or 50 to Brighton.

Carl Prean survived longer than other British players until the fourth round. His win against the reigning world champion was the highlight of his trip.

I can offer my readers an 'exclusive'. Alan Cooke and Carl reached the semi final of the event in the men's doubles. It is something you did not read elsewhere, certainly not in the 8 or so pages of praise and self-praise which this journal devoted to the event. In fact Carl and Cookie lost 20-22 in the third to the eventual winners, Waldner and Appelgren and so, after two match points, missed a sure spot in Grandstand on the box.

KENT Adrian Hall

SPORTS MINISTER ROBERT Atkins officially launched the Kent Sports Development Unit, the first of its kind, which will concentrate on better coaching and improving venues by taking a county-wide perspective in

planning for sport. Kent County Council leader Tony Hart said "This is an exciting and innovative project. I am confident that it will create more sporting opportunities for the people of Kent." Kent County table tennis were one of the sports bodies invited to put on an exhibition for the Minister with a combination of the Junior and Senior County players.

Juliet Houghton with two wins enabled Kent seniors to earn a 5-5 draw at Gwent. Houghton was well supported by Andy Cunning, Justin Goodall and Julie Lawrence.

Rotherhithe had a splendid 5-4 win over North Middx in the second round of the Bromfield Trophy. Natasha Barham got Rotherhithe off to a good start with a win over Caroline O'Leary who later fought back to beat both Michelle Ritter and Joanne Barham. Talya Greenberg gave North Middx a 3-2 lead with a win against Joanne Barham before Ritter won the crucial 7th game against Greenberg. Rotherhithe's zone final away to Brighton was a better match than the score suggests with Brighton cruising home 8-1, winning all their matches two straight. Rotherhithe's lone success was Natasha Barham's win over Clair Brown.

National Team Events (Hammersley Cup)

Maidstone Under 14 Girls team of Crystal Hall, Alison Smith and Rachel Woolven won the Zone 4 final by beating Rotherhithe 6-3 and are due to meet Bristol in the semi final.

Maidstone & District Championships

A crowd in excess of 120 attended finals night at the Larkfield Club on 19th February. For many years the older members of the league have fought off the challenge of the younger up-and-coming players on the whole with a good deal of success but at the end of this year's championships it was the youngsters that made their presence felt.

Results

Men's Singles

Darren Boyce

Women's Singles

Alison Pearson

Junior Boys

Martin Hewett

Junior Girls

Carly Riggs

Veteran Men

Bruce Bengé

Veteran Ladies

Maz Garlinge

Mens Doubles

McConkey/McConket

Mixed Doubles

Chapman/Stewart

Ladies Doubles

Garlinge/Riggs

Gravesend Championships

No. 1 seed Wayne Youngs confirmed his superiority in the league by again winning the men's singles final at the Traders Club beating second seed Lauri Spillet.

In the mixed doubles final Jackie Mersh and Wayne Holder were finally beaten by Sue Wilders/Diplock, whilst the junior doubles was won by David and Paul Crowe.

Diplock/Jim Lindley won the men's doubles and favourite David Chow won the junior singles with Jackie Mersh and Sue Wilders winning the ladies doubles.

Laurie Spillet won the Veterans mens and Jackie Mersh the Veterans ladies.

LANCASHIRE Stan Clarke

SATURDAY 25TH JANUARY saw the eight teams of the Senior Premier Division converging on the St Neots TTC for the second time this season. After the first three matches played on the first weekend Lancashire

Counties 5

languished in 5th place with relegation a distinct possibility. Once again Jonathon Taylor was unavailable due to commitments abroad, his place was taken by Graham Clarke to play at No. 3 behind Sean Gibson and Andrew Eden. This weekend the team was able to field two lady players in Maria Thornley and Amanda Winskill, not having to concede two games per match must surely help the Lancashire team.

The first match was won against Sussex 9-1 with Sally Weston beating Amanda Winskill 26-24 in the third for their only success.

The second match was against Beds who were in bottom place at the start of the weekend. A recurrence of a back injury ruled Amanda Winskill out of the game, but fortunately Paula French was on hand to fill the gap yet again. Lancashire won 8-2.

Results in the other matches had suddenly thrown the division wide open and the Lancashire team realised that if they could win both of their matches on the Sunday and other results went their way, they could still finish up as Champions.

The final round of matches started with French again replacing Winskill, Lancashire went straight to a 4-0 sets lead. Paula then lost to Sara Williams and Eden beat Hyacinth. 5-1 to Lancashire. Paula lost her second to Angela Smith before Gibson ensured the win beating Nigel Tyler. The following two games went to Middlesex, with Graham Clarke taking part in an entertaining match with Graham Sandley.

Lancashire had done all that could be asked of them, finishing with 11 points, they now had to await the outcome of the match between Devon and Sussex. A tense, nail biting affair that took almost five and a half hours to complete, leaving the Lancashire team waiting for over 2 hours to find their fate. Devon eventually ran out 6-4 winners and their superior sets average left Lancashire in runners up position.

Overall a fine display from all of the team but especially the men and in particular Graham Clarke who finished his first appearance in the premier division with 6 wins from 8 matches and also a mention for Paula French who, thrown in the deep end, won only one set from a possible ten, but that win was enough to give a draw against Surrey in the first weekend without which second place would not have been possible.

Lancashire 2nd senior team are also pushing hard for promotion from Division 2. They have two matches to play with possibly their strongest challenge coming from neighbours Cheshire, who they play in the last match of the season.

LEICESTERSHIRE

Derek Butt

No change of the LDITL Division 1 with Loughborough Kingfishers continuing to hold top spot as we head towards the run in for the Championships but its not over yet with four teams in with a shout, but I think Kingfishers will hold out and win the title. The top four teams are Loughborough Kingfishers, Knight Park, Leicester Electricity and Great Glen.

There was a piece of history made in Division 10 when Leicester Electricity met Knight Park, the league's oldest male member Phil Smith (80) came up against the League's youngest player Laura Smith (11 no relation) and also he met with the league's oldest lady player Dorothy Tudor (no age available). Phil lost to Laura, but beat Dot.

In the Midland League Mens Division 2 fixtures recently, Leicester lost 2 out of 3, their only win was against Hinckley by 7-3, the start of the game was Hinckley's Alan Philpot winning his three games. The County sides did not fare too well either with the Cadet boys going down to Peterborough 2-6 in the Leach Cup and Cadet Girls losing to Leamington in the Hammersley Cup.

The Rose Bowl for the ladies Leicester lost to a very strong side from Wolverhampton, surely the Wolverhampton side must win this event.

The girls lost to Chesterfield in the Bromfield Trophy 2-7 who had Nicola Deaton on their side. Helen Griffiths won two of her three for us. Our men did fare better in the Willmott Cup and qualified for the zone final, beating Leamington.

The Leicester Closed Championships are to be held at the Beaumont Leys Leisure Centre on Sunday 22nd March, and on 5th April Leicester are staging the Inter-Towns Tournament at the Parklands Leisure Centre. Oadby

with teams from Loughborough, Hinckley and Leicester participating.

On to the coaching scene and the Soar Valley class still progress well and I am pleased to say that the Eyres Mansell Complex has now got underway. Some 20 odd youngsters came to the first session and there was plenty of enthusiasm shown. The Leicestershire Schools Championships were also held recently with 150 youngsters arrived to participate and it turned out to be a triumph for former champions. Kathryn Freer took her 3rd title in three years, taking the under 13 girls in a close final against Laura Smith. It was 'same again' for Matthew Hobday in the Under 16 boys. Sister Lisa took the Under 16 girls.

The Tuckwell brothers, Alex and Chris fought their way through some very tough opposition to contest the under 13 boys final with Alex winning this one. Ismael Hajat took the U19 title and champions in each section will represent the county at the National Championships to be held in Coventry in May.

MIDDLESEX

Iris Moss

FIRST OF ALL I must apologise for the absence of any Middlesex notes in the March edition. As I get older, the months get shorter and I am afraid that the copy date passed me by without me noticing it.

I have come to the conclusion that I will never understand Middlesex table tennis players. For years we have had either to cancel the Middlesex Closed for lack of support or have teetered on the edge of doing so. One opinion was that if we 'made it worthwhile financially' we would get not only more entries but that the top players would enter. This year with the cooperation of our new Committee member, Julian Jablon, Linda Farrow Sunglasses agreed to sponsor the men's singles to the tune of £200 for the winner and £100 for the runner up. This generous support allowed us to increase the prize money for the women's singles to a worthwhile amount. The result of this is that at the closing date we had 28 in the men's singles and 8 in the women's singles, albeit that we got 11 out of the 20 top ranked men. Julian has agreed that despite this poor entry, he would like the event to go ahead in the hope that it would give encouragement for a better entry next year. I can only hope that this generosity is rewarded; Julian Jablon and Linda Farrow Sunglasses certainly have the thanks of the Middlesex Committee even if their kindness does not seem to be appreciated by the Middlesex players.

Norman Weston of London Business Houses (an old friend of mine) is anxious to get information about some ladies who won the ladies singles in the London TTL way back. The ladies are Miss W Woodhead (1933/37), Miss J Harding (1938) and Mrs H Collier (1939). Norman has the Cup and would like to give it to one of the ladies who won it so any information you can give him would be welcome. His address is 35 Lincoln Avenue, London N14 7LJ.

Finally, is your club, league or association being charged 'commission' by its bank? If so, you might be interested to know that the Bank of Scotland not only does not charge clubs and associations but gives interest on current accounts which increases with the size of your balance. If you are interested, phone your local branch of the Bank of Scotland or contact them at their head office at The Mound, Edinburgh EH1 1YZ and ask for details of their Treasurer's Account.

NORFOLK

Ray Hogg

NORFOLK SCHOOLS HAVE been neglected for years even though most of our host of junior players go to one. Some attempt was made to organise a regular coaching session after hours in some Norwich schools but even this did not last, mainly because the limited number of people prepared to do it ran out of hours in the day and also lack of transport.

Adde Johnson, a teacher in Norwich, decided to do something about this and entirely on her own affiliated to the ESTTA and organised a schools tournament for half term. Despite lack of time some 57 children entered and the end result was that these players will be going to Coventry for the final

Counties 6

stages of the individuals - U19 Girls Helen Woods; Boys Terry Venables; U16 Girls Melanie Chaplin; Boys Justin Rolfe; U13 Girls Ashleigh Mackellar; Boys Leroy Pye; U11 Girls Gemma Keogh; Boys Daniel King.

Most of the entries came from the Norwich area which was not because other leagues were not wanted, just because time was against the finding out who exactly to contact to invite entries. A committee is to be formed for the organising of future events and a member from each of the leagues would in my view be necessary to make the events truly countyside. The entry of 57 could easily double if all leagues enter next time - possibly the October half term. Another possibility being investigated is matches against other counties for our U11 boys and girls. This is only the beginning of what could be a big thing both for the county and table tennis generally so let us have some volunteers to help other than those who normally do everything.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Dennis Millman

THE FORTY FIFTH KETTERING Closed Tournament was a tremendous success, made more memorable by a scintillating display from Graeme McKim who, at his masterful best, brushed aside all opposition to take the men's singles title for the tenth successive time.

Although the opposition was not as formidable as on some earlier occasions, this was McKim's finest hour - demonstrating yet again that he is in a class of his own.

Keith Jones reached the final without conceding an end, but now his superb defensive game was taken apart by McKim's power and speed, as the County No. 1 raced to this unparalleled triumph with the greatest flair and finesse.

However Jones also had his moments of glory for in addition to winning the Veterans Over 40 singles, the Veterans Doubles with Geoff Atkinson and the Mixed with Muriel Cox, he also became a sixth successful partner for McKim in the latter's eighth winning of the men's doubles, while McKim franked his success by taking the Premier Division Handicap.

The ladies singles was contested by Jane Johnston, who as Jane Nicoll had taken the title four times between 1979 and 1983, and Muriel Cox, whose daughter Kristina had twice won the event in recent years. On this occasion it was the accuracy and perseverance of Mrs Cox which gave her the trophy for the first time but Mrs Johnson and last year's singles winner Cathy Fleming won the ladies doubles.

While Julian Marshall reigned supreme at Junior level, there were promising displays from Helen Watts and David Judd who each won two events, from Paul Thomas who won the U15 singles and finished runner up in 2 further competitions, from Stephen Woolston and Gabrielle Evans. Gabrielle, at nine the youngest player in the Burton Baptists, sponsored Mystery doubles, was paired with the most experienced Ken Nicoll, but having battled through to the two ended final, were beaten by a single point by Alan Knight and Scott Dixon.

Bill Lupton won the Over 50's Veteran event and in the Veteran Doubles Phil Slade and David Huddle fully extended the eventual winners Jones and Geoff Atkinson. Huddle in his first year at this level, made a further mark when he beat previous holders Atkinson and Gerald Finney on his way to the final of the over 40's, while Slade in addition to playing, doubled as tournament organiser and managed a tight schedule, with over 300 matches completed in 15 hours, ending just before midnight.

Heating and Ventilating Specialists Reznor (UK) Ltd hit on a winner when they sponsored the County Veterans Top 12 and were so pleased with the outcome that they have already confirmed a repeat performance for next season. Some superb play on the day finally enabled Keith Jones to confirm his position as the county's No. 1 but the issue remained in doubt right up to the final rubber, when Jones beat Geoff Atkinson in one of the few clear cut games of the day, Jones gradually overcoming Atkinson's incessant attack.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Aubrey Drapkin

IAN ROBERTSON OF North Shields is the new County champion, having defeated Gareth Jones in the final of the men's singles at Wallsend in the Wilding Office Equipment Northumberland County Closed. In fact Ian, more commonly known as Benny, picked up three titles as he also won the men's doubles, partnered by Malcolm Lusk and the handicap singles.

In the men's event Benny beat Mike Daniels, Ken Bowman, Neil McMaster and Steve Riggins before coming up against Gareth Jones, a student from Humberside who is currently playing in the Northumbria League. Benny won 21-13, 22-20 in the final. Jones had come through from the top half of the draw where the defending champion Eddie Smith had withdrawn because of injury. Jones had impressive victories against Alan Matthewson, Charlie Robertson, Martin Wyld and Dave Godbold before meeting Benny in the final. In the men's doubles Robertson and Lusk defeated Dave Godbold and Chris Thorpe whilst Robertson took the handicap title with a victory over Steve Penman (+3).

The ladies championship went to Lynne Yarnell, who defeated Caron Guthrie in the final. Caron had some consolation in winning the Ladies doubles, partnered by Karen Newby. They beat Pauline Long and Debbie Scholfield in the final.

The Veterans title went to Bob Dodds who defeated Alan Livingstone 21-13, 23-21.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Malcolm Allsop

THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CLOSED Championships attracted a disappointingly low entry, but provided an entertaining tournament for those who did compete and support. Tim Sheppard and Junior Stoddart proved a class above the opposition to contest the men's singles final where Tim won the first game and led nearly all the way in the second, only for Junior to throw caution to the wind to snatch the title 14-21, 23-21, 21-18.

Tim and Junior combined to win the men's doubles without dropping a game - beating Terry Bull and Trevor Kerry 21-18, 21-16 in the final.

Sarah-Jane Smith won two titles, taking the women's singles 21-15, 21-18 over Angela Brettel and the Junior girls 21-11, 21-10 over Debby Pestka. Angela Brettel and Lorraine Smedley, the only senior pair in the women's doubles, demonstrated their experience to take the title 21-12, 22-20 over Ann-Marie and Michelle Haynes.

Ken Philipson won the veteran singles with a win over John Ellis, after Ellis had put out Dennis Collins 15-21, 21-14, 21-18 in the semi final.

Kevin Green beat Gary Pestka 23-21, 21-13 in the boys singles final, one of the best finals of the day. Gary gained consolation in the junior doubles final in partnership with Mark Short when they beat the surprise finalists Daniel Edwards and Michelle Haynes 21-13, 21-13.

Daniel has been playing the sport for only two years and has been invited to join the England Cadet training squad. Daniel is the son of former Mansfield Town and Notts County footballer Dick Edwards.

The Haynes sisters dominated the cadet singles with Michelle beating Ann-Marie 21-7, 21-5 in the final.

Questions as to the whereabouts of the trophies were not answered although the men's singles came back from Wales! The return of the other trophies is still awaited!

SOMERSET

Andy Seward

THE COUNTY VETERANS first team duly attained the 6th win of the season to become champions of Division 2D but it was a close thing against Glos 2. The usual double from Brian Reeves, one from John Crabtree, another Ladies singles victory for Shirley Dark plus the mixed doubles and Somerset were home and dry - just! It is not very often that Somerset win anything in the County Championships, so congratulations.

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The 2nds were also successful, winning 6-3 against Herts 5, the wins for Paul Hewitt, one each from Martin Rumary and George Philpott, plus an interesting tactical win for Wendy Pryce. Seven out of the nine matches went the distance, sometimes it seemed as if the players did it by design - I was the umpire!

The Juniors played two more matches this month. One win against Devon 3 and a narrow defeat against Gwent were recorded. An encouraging debut here for Alan Russell from Yeovil. However, being one girl short due to a late injury turned a probable win into inevitable defeat. Our apologies to the counties concerned.

Taunton League

in the 1st Division Elms Aces, a young team led by Phil Payne and Mark Smith, are currently in top spot, closely followed by several teams virtually all composed of veterans. In Division 2 a new team from Wellington are at the top. Although they lost to their closest rivals, Wiveliscombe recently, ex Junior Kevin Lau remained unbeaten.

The Taunton Closed will be held at Wellington Sports Centre later this month. It is mainly from this venue, thanks to the coaching efforts of Tony Carey, that the league is receiving new blood.

Injuries

Following injuries to two of our top junior boys as mentioned last month, news arrives that our top junior girl Kate Gent, having already had operations on both knees, had to withdraw from the recent county junior weekend because of further problems. With the limited playing strength we have in the county, fate is not with us at present. We wish her well.

Dates

The County Senior Weekend for Division 2B teams is being held at Westlands, Yeovil, on 4th April and the Somerset Closed Championships will be held at the Shepton Mallet Leisure Centre on 12th April. Scrumpy available at both venues.

Next month, news from another of the local leagues, plus news from the usual locals I mean the usual local news.

SUFFOLK Bert Newman

THE SENIOR FIRST team have elected to play their fixtures this season on a two venue basis, and at their first venue held in Sheffield on 25th January, returned home with 1 draw, 1 win and 2 losses. The squad was made up of Stuart Palmer, John Kitchener, Richard Tanner, Sue Welham and a late addition of Janet Scoulding. Janet was only approached on the afternoon prior to the weekend to play after Karen Perkins withdrew on the previous evening. This produced a knock-on effect which left the Senior 2nd team to bring in a lady, Liz Rhem, at very short notice for their away fixture to Norfolk, which unfortunately they lost. At present they are the strongest team in their division supporting the rest.

The Junior 1st team are at present placed in the nether regions of their division 1A having only collected 2 points, with a win over Northamptonshire. In January due to play away to Clwyd at a place called Hope (an apt name I feel) they failed to meet together at Newmarket in the early hours of 25th January and despite asking for the opportunity to play the fixture 3 hours later, they were told that this was not possible so had to forfeit the points. On 8th and 9th February they made the long haul to North Shields, to play Northumberland and lost 3-7, the only wins being achieved by Emma Corbette 1 and Sarah Davison 2, a newcomer to the side. The next day we played Durham at Washington and despite being 4-3 up at one stage, finally lost 4-6. Lee Baalam won 1, Matthew Clark (playing for the first time) won 1, Emma Corbette won 1 and Sarah Davison won 1. The Junior 2nd team played Essex 3rd on 25th January and were overcome 0-10 by a very strong side managed by Alan Shepherd. They are though comfortably placed in their division, mid table.

Local Leagues

The Ipswich TTL, still without a secretary, will be staging their annual Closed Championships at the Corn Exchange over the weekend of 6/7/8th March. The

event must rate as one of the largest local league Closed Championships in the country. The Stowmarket Finals are scheduled to take place on 10th April 1992 at the ICI premises. The staging of the new Inter-League will take place at the Bury St Edmunds Sports Centre, hosted by the Bury League and so far 5 of the 7 Leagues in Suffolk have agreed to enter.

SURREY Terry Vance

AT THE SURREY Junior Championships only 50 different people entered the 11 events. Oh! Where are the days when there were 300 entrants? If anyone has any suggestions for increasing the numbers in both Senior and Junior events, please let Gail or myself know. Is the calendar too full? When the date was picked there were no other events clashing, but come the closing date and there are at least 3 other events taking place that effect our entries.

Results

U17 Girls
Vanja Santic
U17 Boys
Darren Blake
U14 Girls
Katherine Wells
U14 Boys
Stephen Lampkin
U12 Girls
Victoria Lampkin
U12 Boys
Shameet Shah
U17 Girls Doubles
Deba Ali/Santic
U17 Boys Doubles
Blake/Lampkin
U14 Girls Doubles
Sarah Lane/Katherine Wells
U14 Boys Doubles
Lampkin/Siddanth Karalliedde
Mixed Doubles
Dharmika Karalliedde/Santic

Vanja Santic (from Yugoslavia but studying in Guildford) and Stephen Lampkin both gained three titles. The scratch pairing of Toyin Bakare and Joanna Lambert surprised everyone by reaching the final of the Cadet Girls Doubles.

Thames Valley Division 2 is headed by Chessington 3 with Rosehill 3 in 2nd place. MMB1 are holding everyone up. In Division 3 Teddington 3, Molesey 1 and Ewell Cedars are within 3 points of each other at the top. Bottom is Air Products. Division 4 leaders are Chessington 5, Rovers and Hinchley Wood 2 all within 2 points of each other. Chessington 6 are propping them up. In Division 7 Alexandra and Elmbridge 3 are skating away with the title whilst Spicer 11 are in 11th position.

SUSSEX John Woodford

SUSSEX TABLE TENNIS players responded in magnificent style to a charitable cause at an Eastbourne hotel on 28th February - £1,500 was raised for the Ronald McDonald House attached to Guy's Hospital, London. It all came about when baby Alex Moore, newborn son of Steve and Cathy Moore, was given a life-saving heart operation at Guy's just after he was born - just as Sussex were being relegated in the County Championships. There were many

Counties 8

anxious days for the Moores in the month that followed and now there is excellent news that Alex is well on the road to recovery, although there is some way to go.

Steve Moore, an associate at the Eastbourne-based accountants Price and Co, received heart-warming support from his colleagues and friends when he decided to support the Guy's Hospital charity with a table tennis evening.

Nearly 200 turned up. The packed house watched Nicky Mason, Steve Moore take on challengers and also to attempt to break the world counter-hitting record of 172 strokes held by a couple of Swiss players, according to the Guinness Book of Records.

The record attempt did not succeed - 157 strokes was the best, but the fans were thrilled by the success of the evening which was boosted by tombolas, raffles. Everything was moulded together by the MC Diccon Gray, whose reputation for putting some 'zip' into his public speaking excursions is growing fast.

Meanwhile, the biggest event of the year, the All Sussex Championships is nearly here - 16 events at the Worthing Leisure Centre, organised by the Worthing TTA.

All the Sussex players should be present, except the No. 1 woman, Janet Smith, who will be playing in the European Championships in Stuttgart on the date of the Sussex event on 12th April.

WILTSHIRE

Laurie Selby

CHRIS HOLLEY PRICKED the hopes of the opposition when he became both the men's singles and men's doubles champion at the West Wilts League Championships.

The England and Avon ranked player was in top gear in the singles when he outthit Wiltshire county player Trevor Lloyd 21-11, 21-11. Holley partnered Marc Cotton to victory in the doubles over veterans Basil Thompson and Mike Oxley. But Oxley and Thompson went away with trophies when they won a close match against Cliff Benson and Tony Milham in the veteran's doubles.

Oxley also won the veterans singles against John Ford. Lynn Standbridge took the women's singles when she inched out 26-24 in the final game against Julie Dean. But Julie had the compensation of four other titles. She and Nigel Waite won both the handicap doubles and the mixed doubles and then Julie teamed with Katie Putt to beat the mother and daughter team Mary and Cora Rossiter in the women's doubles.

Julie was also a winner in the Divisional singles. She won the group for Division 1 players. Adrian Phillips won Division 2 and Mark Goodship won Division 3. Two Division 3 players fought out the divisional singles final, Bill Pickett beating Richard Terrell.

Stuart Wakeley won the intermediate singles; Nigel Daniels the consolation singles, Roy Cary and Ray Cordery the consolation doubles, and Basil Thompson the over 50's.

A tournament for Westbury Youth Centre members resulted in Russell Crumpler beating Adam Pothecary in the cadet singles. Russell and Katie Putt won the doubles.

Mark Goodship beat Ralph Hall in the Under 17 singles and partnered Stephen Dimblylow to victory in the doubles. The events were sponsored by Audience Systems of Westbury.

WORCESTERSHIRE

Ken Walton

APOLOGIES TO ALISON Westwood, Sue Horton, Joanne Hill, Mandy House, not forgetting Linda Reid, for getting mixed up as to who won the ladies doubles title at the County Closed!!

To put the record straight Mandy and Linda defeated Sue and Alison in the final. Must have been all those green shirts that confused me. The County Firsts face an anxious wait to see if they will remain in Division 1B or be relegated, after the second session of matches played in Essex recently. Defeats at the hands of Devon 2nds, and Middx 2nds, left them with only a 7-3 victory over a Phil Bradbury led Bucks to cheer about. In this match both Eric Hardman and Trevor Washington defeated Steve Cowley, Eric doing so at 28-26 in the third!!!

Peter Bird's team competitions are nearing their finale with Cripplegate Guild, Studley Road SC, CMB C and Hartlebury amongst the last 8 teams left in the Handicap event.

In the County League, also nearing its completion, Dudley look set to retain the title, with Worcester appearing to be the only side capable of stopping them. Steve Horton, Paul Carter and Eric Hardman have been the mainstay of the Dudley team, with Mark Brookes and Mark Kingley also helping out. At the recent Dudley tournament, Thorns players Julian Wootton and Mark Brookes, battled their way into the Open Singles final, to be played on Dudley League finals and presentation night, 27th April at the Richardson Hall, Wordsley, spectators welcome.

Brookes also reached the doubles final with partner Mark Kingley and they will play last year's beaten finalists, Paul Garter and Eric Hardman, in the final. Joanne Hill won the ladies final, defeating Sandwell Nalgo's Pat Hill (no relation) in the final, two straight. Those 'quick as a flash' Worcester ladies have been at it again in the Women's British League matches, played on 29th Feb/1st March at Crystal Leisure Centre, Stourbridge. Janet Hunt, Helen Pogmore and Linda Reid tell me that their sponsor's name carries no reference to them buying a round of drinks, or indeed to mopping the floor of the venue, although they are grateful to them, just the same.

YORKSHIRE

Rea Balmford

YORKSHIRE IS ONE of the first counties to benefit from the Sports Council's new Focus Sport programme and the County Management were delighted when their own Coaching Officer, Ray Burch, was given the nod to take over a three year stint as Regional Development Officer under the scheme.

Ray is already in post and working hard - 'That's a joke' was the comment of wife Mavis when I rang the Burch household shortly after he had taken over an mentioned the 61 year old's retirement. His involvement with table tennis began in his home town of Newark and when he moved to Mirfield in 1970 he spent some 16 years with the Dewsbury League before moving on to Huddersfield four years ago. Looking forward to the challenge in his usual forthright and positive way, he will be looking to arouse interest in the under-developed areas of England's biggest county, to bring into use school facilities for after-school play, both for youngsters still at school and for members of the wider community, and to improve the image of the sport in sports and leisure centres where it all too frequently has a 'Cinderella' image compared with other sport.

And in my own city the Hull Association's Development Officer Steve Hopkins has been appointed by the Humberside County Council as their Development Officer for table tennis - an extension of the duties he performed for the local league under the auspices of major sponsors Sandhill Garden Centre - and he is now able to spread the net wider. Steve will obviously work closely with Ray over the widespread and largely rural East Yorkshire area, but his 'patch' also covers the area south of the Humber administered by the Lincolnshire Association which will also mean liaison with a colleague from the East Midlands Sports Council area when appointed.

The Closed Championships season has now got underway and two sets of results are already to hand from York where their own Championships were followed by the Junior and ladies events of the Yorkshire Closed. The last named event is to split into two separate tournaments - and so mens and veterans will be played on 1st March, again at York. Leeds players Rachel Brook and Lynda Fahey dominated the ladies events, with Rachel overcoming Lynda in the singles final and the pair then joining forces to win both doubles and team event. Robert Sharp won both singles and doubles in the juniors whilst Zoe Fisher claimed four titles - Junior/Cadet singles and doubles. Maureen Gott made history as she won her 14th singles title out of 15 outings. Martin Thompson won the men's title. Other results - Mixed Doubles Mark Bond/Doug Bartle; Ladies Doubles Sally Russell/Jane Cohen; Mixed Doubles Graham Hatfield/Gott; Veterans Singles Doug Bartle.

Finally from York, one of the leading 'hard bat' exponents, John McGough has moved on to Edinburgh, but there will no doubt be plenty of life left in the old 'Barna' yet as it moves onto the Scottish circuit.

Results from the Yorkshire 2 Star Graded, the Mens and Veteran Closed and the Huddersfield Championships next month, plus any other information I can unearth or which is sent to me.

A master craftsman



Fiona Elliot (left) and master craftsman Desmond Douglas

WELCOME to the Desmond Douglas show - that could well be the notice on the programme for the Wiltshire Five Star Open.

Douglas is fast making the tournament his own, having twice been champion and once runner-up.

The Walsall player had three reasons to give rousing cheers at this season's tournament.

The 36-year-old master craftsman demonstrated all his skills on the table to take home the men's singles and doubles championships.

And then he heard that "his" team, Aston Villa, who were also playing in Swindon on the same day, had won their FA Cup clash.

Top seeds Douglas and Matthew Syed went through to the final without too much drama.

But it seemed as if Syed's brilliant blend of stubborn defence and screaming counter attacks might earn him the top prize.

It certainly took him to a 12-6 lead in the opening game. But then it seemed Douglas remembered that only a few days earlier he was helping coach Syed to qualify for the Barcelona Olympic games.

The teacher took control and put the pupil in his place. "I changed my tactics and kept him away from the

table" said Douglas. It paid off as he pulled back to 14-14 and then allowed Syed only two more points in the first game.

With one hand already on the cup, Douglas showed no sign of losing his grip in the second game. He soon went ahead - and stayed there.

The Link Centre venue seems to suit Douglas who said afterwards: "I like playing here, the conditions are good."

Another elder statesman of the game might echo those sentiments. John Hilton, who 11 years ago was the European champion, won through to the semi-finals after Steve Dorking annexed number three seed Nicky Mason in that half of the final.

Hilton cashed in by disposing of Dorking but got no change from Douglas. "That's more respectable" he called out when he got 16 points in the second game. It was - he won as many points as Syed did in the final.

With both the top seeds, Lisa Lomas and Andrea Holt, pulling out of the tournament, everybody thought that Alison Gordon was set to retain the women's singles title. Everybody, that is, but Fiona

Elliot. And even she must have had a few doubts when she trailed 16-20 in the first game.

She soon dispelled them by rattling off the next six points. Brimming with confidence, there was no stopping her as she breezed through the second game.

Success must have been even the more sweet for Fiona, who failed to qualify for the Olympics, to beat a player who did.

Alison and Fiona teamed up to win the women's doubles with an easy victory over Katherine Goodall (Leeds) and Carol Hewett (Uckfield).

Douglas took his day's earnings up to £735 when he teamed with Nicky Mason to defeat Steve Dorking and Jonathan Taylor in straight games.

Three local players won through the qualifying rounds to the main draw.

Claire Hunter (Swindon) lost to Katherine Goodall; Brenda Lee went down to Teresa Moore (Bexhill) and Eddie Roofe was beaten by Richard Hyacinth (Middlesex).

Tournament organiser Bill Willson paid tribute to Mike Oxley, a Wiltshire veteran, whose firm P.A. Oxley antique clocks and barometers, stepped in to sponsor the tournament after the original sponsor pulled out days before the event.

RESULTS

Men's Singles S/F:

D. Douglas (Walsall) bt J. Hilton (Manchester) 21-16, 21-16; M. Syed (Reading) bt S. Gibson (Brentwood) 21-11, 21-12. Final: Douglas bt Syed 21-16, 21-16.

Women's Singles S/F:

F. Elliot (Wolverhampton) bt J. Harris (Walsall) 21-16, 21-17; A. Gordon (Reading) bt H. Lower (Wolverhampton) 21-12, 21-17. Final: Miss Elliot bt Miss Gordon 22-20, 21-13.

Men's Doubles S/F:

D. Douglas and N. Mason (Bexhill-on-Sea) bt S. Ward (Newport) and P. Lewis (Nailsea) 13-21, 21-16, 21-10; S. Dorking (Hornchurch) and J. Taylor (Manchester) bt S. Gibson and J. Holland (Brentwood) 21-17, 9-21, 21-19. Final: Douglas and Mason bt Dorking and Taylor 21-17, 21-11.

Women's Doubles S/F:

F. Elliot and A. Gordon bt L. Radford (Upminster) and H. Lower 22, -20, 21-17; K. Goodall (Leeds) and C. Hewett (Uckfield) bt Sally and Samantha Marling (Hull) 21-16, 21-9. Final: Miss Elliot and Miss Gordon bt Miss Goodall and Miss Hewett 21-10, 21-9.

Wonderful weekend



Pavilion Ladies from Brighton Sussex, the 'Team of the Weekend'. Pictured (left to right) are the Mayoress of Dudley Doris Tromans, Pavilion Ladies Pauline Steel, Rosemary Rainton and Barbara Bayford, and the wife of Dudley's Chairman of Leisure Marion Simpson

BARRING the sensation that every reporter hopes for, N.F.D. Grove, comprising no's 2,3,4 and 8 on the current ranking list, were always going to top the Premier Division table at the end of this season first Women's league weekend at the Crystal Leisure Centre, Stourbridge. The sensation did not happen and so the main interest revolved around the battle for second place between last seasons runner up Commonwealth All Stars and Hull Sandhill. This was resolved on the first evening when despite Commonwealths Janet Smith winning the opening set and Nicola Deaton the last, Hull took the four in between to win 4-2 which also enabled Sally Marling, later nominated as 'Woman of the Weekend', to retire after the first day with a 100% record. Sally's good form, but without good fortune, continued on Sunday morning when she twice held match points against Andrea Holt before going down 25-23 in the third. With Maria Thornley taking Fiona Elliot to '18' in the third the 6 love score in this match was hardly a fair reflection and is another indication that the gap is



Woman of the Weekend Sally Marling of Hull Sandhill I

closing. In the final match Miss Marling lost her third set, surprisingly easily to Linda Radford which was a major factor in Fellows Cranleigh's creditable draw. The promoted Welsh Ladies will need the rub of their home tables in Cardiff in May if they are to retain their Premier Division status.

With Carol Giles winning 9 out of 10 and Elaine Short 7 Plymouth Pavilion will be disappointed to find themselves 3 points behind division one leaders Hull Sandhill 2nds; Carol losing to Jean Parker 19 and 19; the point dropped by Plymouth in the final match against Graham Spicer probably means that Hull for whom Alison Evans remained unbeaten will remain supreme.

As the scene moves to Wales Division 2 is the most keenly contested with 1 point covering 3 teams at the top; City of Milton Keynes who came with a late rush last season to clinch promotion just edge out Bayer Bradford and Playline Sovereign with both of whom they drew; Kitti Kottasz, Milton Keynes only ever present winning 7 out of 10 whilst Playline's Janet Dunning was the divisions most successful

WOMEN'S BRITISH LEAGUE - 2

player losing only to M.K.'s Gemma Schwartz in her 10 sets.

Olivetti Bribar and Fulleriens lead the race to get out of the basement divisions each surrendering but one point throughout their 5 matches. In the final match Bribar met a Grove 2nd team with an impressive sets average of 24 love but saw them off by 4 sets to 2 but not without Cathryn Johnson losing her 100% record of Jose Bongers who thus returned an 8 from 8 maximum. Olivetti's one dropped point was to Sunderland for whom Julie Svenson won a brace. Fulleriens dropped point was to Grove 3rd and were spearheaded by Lesley Keast's 9 from 10. Team of the weekend was Pavilion Ladies from Worthing represented by Rosemary Bainton, Barbara Bayford and Pauline

Steel, one of the few secretaries to send me copies of local press cuttings.

The support given by the Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council and the Crystal Leisure Centre was outstanding as it was in the previous 2 seasons; events had in fact started on the Friday evening with a challenge match between the Mayor, Councillor Geoff Tromans and the Chairman of the Leisure Services Committee, Councillor John Simpson. These two gentlemen together with their wives were also present throughout much of the weekend including the opening and closing ceremonies.

Again, a cracking weekend; very competitive but played in great spirit and now well established as one of the social events of the calendar.



Showing the women how to play are Dudley's Mayor Councillor Geoff Tromans and Dudley's Chairman of Leisure Services Councillor John Simpson

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Milkmaid Rachel Brook (top) of Bayer Bradford, celebrates with a glass of milk. Whilst the Welsh Ladies (left to right, bottom) Laura Collier, Sian Evans and Natasha Williams celebrate St. David's Day

WOMEN'S BRITISH LEAGUE

PREMIER DIVISION	P	W	L	D	F	A	PTS
NFD GROVE	5	5	0	0	29	1	10
HULL SANDHILLS	5	3	1	1	15	15	7
COMMONWEALTH ALLSTAR	5	3	2	0	18	12	6
FELLOWS CRANLEIGH	5	0	2	3	10	20	3
PLAYLINE SOVEREIGNS	5	1	3	1	10	20	3
WELSH LADIES	5	0	4	1	8	22	1

DIVISION 1	P	W	L	D	F	A	PTS
HULL SANDHILLS II	5	5	0	0	22	8	10
PLYMOUTH PAVILIONS	5	3	1	1	21	9	7
AMITY GENERATION	5	2	2	1	13	17	5
BRISTOL LADIES	5	1	2	2	13	17	4
GRAHAM SPICER	5	0	3	2	11	19	2
SHOESTRINGS	5	0	3	2	10	20	2

DIVISION 2	P	W	L	D	F	A	PTS
CITY OF MILTON KEYNES	5	3	0	2	18	12	8
BAYER BRADFORD	5	3	1	1	18	12	7
PLAYLINE SOVEREIGNS	5	3	1	1	18	12	7
OAKS I	5	2	2	1	16	14	5
VYMURA INTERNATIONAL	5	1	4	0	11	19	2
CITY OF NEWCASTLE	5	0	4	1	9	21	1

DIVISION 3A	P	W	L	D	F	A	PTS
OLIVETTI BRIBAR	5	4	0	1	24	6	9
NFD GROVE II	5	4	1	0	26	4	8
SUNDERLAND LADIES	5	3	1	1	18	12	7
WELSH LADIES II	5	2	3	0	13	17	4
BRIBAR BELLES	5	1	4	0	8	22	2
OAKS II	5	0	5	0	1	29	0

DIVISION 3B	P	W	L	D	F	A	PTS
FULLERIANS	5	4	0	1	23	7	9
NFD GROVE III	5	3	1	1	21	9	7
PAVILION LADIES	5	3	2	0	17	13	6
LESSA	5	2	2	1	16	14	5
WORCESTER LADIES	5	1	3	1	12	18	3
BSAD	5	0	5	0	1	29	0

Essex back to Premier

12 MATCHES were played at Hornchurch to complete the SENIOR DIV 1B programme. The Essex team, on home ground, was invincible winning their 3 matches in fine form. This included the 9-1 defeat of nearest rivals from Avon in the final vital match. On Sunday morning Essex called in the "reserves" and along came Skylet Andrew for the last 2 matches against Wiltshire and Avon. Good to see him back in the County Championships. But, credit to the Essex players, they had already beaten Middlesex 2nds 9-1. Linda Radford played in all matches and finished with a 100% record. Avon did very well and lost only their last match against the strong Essex team.

Buckinghamshire had lost only to leaders Essex and Avon so there was a surprise when they went down 3-7 to Worcestershire in their last match. Malcolm Green played well for Worcestershire to win his 2 events including a 10 and 11 defeat of Philip Bradbury. The closest finish of the weekend matches was when Eric Hardman (Wo) beat Steve Cowley (Bu) -5, 8, 26! Wiltshire will be demoted but Worcestershire are likely to survive as the demotion of Sussex 1st team from Premier Division will push down the Sussex 2nd team.

Full Results

Bu 2	Av 8	Wo 3	Mi2 7
Bu 3	Wo 7	Wo 2	Dv2 8
Bu 8	E 9	Av 1	Sx2 8
Wi 2	Av 6	Sx2 4	Sx2 7
Dv2 3	Mi2 1	E 9	Wi 0
E 10	Mi2 7	Wi 3	

Lancashire 2nds kept their unbeaten record in SENR 2A with a 9-1 win over Leicestershire 2nds. Paul Hutchings and Chris Ford (La) kept up their 100% records. But Chris Ford had a hard fight against Keith Fellows - he won 20 and 21! The 2 bottom of table teams met with Warwickshire 2nds getting a 6-4 win over Lincolnshire. In the final event, to get the win, John Williams (Wa) beat Jim Brewster -10, 17, 20! Cheshire visited Cumbria and came away with an 8-2 win.

Just 1 match in SENR 2B. The teams from the foot of the table met with Gloucestershire going into a 4-nil lead over Worcestershire and finishing with an 8-2 win. Sue Horton played



The victorious Essex team

well to win her 2 events for Worcestershire.

Hertfordshire continue to lead the way in SENR 2C with a 7-3 win over Cambridgeshire 2nds. John Taylor and Emma Hurling (He) continue unbeaten. Essex 2nds lost the first 2 events against Norfolk but came back to win 7-3. Suffolk 2nds, still without a point, lost 3-7 to Bedfordshire 2nds.

SENR 2D leaders Surrey 2nds were shaken by a 7-3 defeat at the hands of Berkshire 2nds. David Reeves (Bk) played very well to win his 2 matches, including the 15 and 13 defeat of Edward Hatley. Berkshire 2nds are 2 points behind Surrey 2nds but have a match in hand. Oxfordshire forced a draw with Hampshire, who due to illness, were a lady short. Dawn Barnett (Ox) had a good 18 in 3rd win over Sarah Turner. Dorset visited Hove and lost 3-7 to Sussex 3rds. Brian Garroway did well to win his 2 matches for Dorset.

Staffordshire 2nds had a 10-nil win over Clwyd in SENR 3A. Interesting to see John Blackband, English Schools Association Chairman, as Referee. Nottinghamshire get nearer to promotion after a 6-4 win over closest rivals - Hertfordshire 3rds. The Notts men - Tim Sheppard, Junior Stoddart, Richard Tilford and Lee Neil - each have 100% wins. Huntingdonshire climbed away from the foot of the table with an 8-2 win over Northamptonshire 2nds. Just 1 match in SENR 3B. It involved the teams - Gwent and Kent - both with 9 points and in 2nd and 3rd position in the table. A draw was the result when, in the final event, J. Hobbs (Gw), who

had earlier lost to J. Goodhall (Kent No.3), beat Paul Rainford 18, -16, 20 to get the 5-5 result.

In JUNR 1A Staffordshire forge ahead with a 9-1 win over Derbyshire. Staffordshire will make Premier Division next season. They still have to meet nearest rivals Yorkshire 2nds, who are not promotion candidates. Clwyd beat bottom of table Northamptonshire 8-2. Natasha Williams (Cw) continues unbeaten. The Suffolk team travelled over the weekend to Durham and Northumberland. They lost to Durham 4-6, which takes that team away from the relegation zone. Against Northumberland 3-7 was the result with Sarah Davison and Emma Corbett (Sk) winning the 3 events. Durham also met Yorkshire 2nds, who got a 7-3 win. Caroline Bentley (Y) beat Jackie Marriott (Nd) 17, -10, 15. Hertfordshire's 8-2 win over Surrey 2nds gives them the championship of JUNR 1B and promotion to Premier Division. Essex 2nds did look candidates to win the championship having already beaten Hertfordshire 9-1. Their recent defeat (4-6) at the hands of Kent ruled out that possibility. Nicola Duke and Craig Hastie (K) won their 4 events. Gloucestershire got a good 8-2 win over Oxfordshire.

Cheshire 1sts have won 6 matches in JUNR 2A. They have dropped just 7 events and look certain for promotion. Their recent win was 8-2 over Warwickshire 2nds. Nottinghamshire are nearest rivals, but already beaten 9-1 by Cheshire. Nottinghamshire's 7-3 defeat of Staffordshire 2nds pushed them into 3rd place. Lancashire 2nds

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS - 2

visited Leicestershire and came away with an 8-2 win. Kevin Dolder (La) won his events at 18 and 20 in deciding games. Cheshire 2nds did well to beat Derbyshire 2nds 6-4.

Norfolk 1st team's 7-3 win over nearest rivals Essex 3rds should give them the JUNR 2B title. Shaun Parsley and Lee Nicholls (Nk) continue with 100% wins. The Essex team also played Norfolk 2nds and won 9-1. Lincolnshire got a good 6-4 win over Hertfordshire 2nds.

6 JUNR 2C matches were played in Gwent. The homesters won 2 matches - 6-4 v Somerset and 7-3 v Avon - to head the table. Their match in April against Cornwall should decide the championship. Worcestershire had 2 good wins - 8-2 over Wiltshire and 10-nil over Devon 3rds. Lee Horton (Wo) continues unbeaten. Avon beat Wiltshire 7-3, with Tracy Youldon (Wi) winning her 2 events. Somerset, with a player short, beat Devon 3rds 7-3.

Buckinghamshire look well set for promotion from JUNR 2D. Their recent win was 9-1 over Hampshire 2nds. Buckinghamshire have dropped just 1 point. Sussex 1sts beat Sussex 2nds 10-nil. Surrey 3rds beat Berkshire 2nds 7-3. Deba Ali (Sy) had 2 wins - both at 18 in the 3rd.

Lancashire win promotion to Premier Division

In VETS 1A Lancashire concluded a successful season with a 6-3 win over Norfolk and will join the Premier Division next season. Phil Blake was their star being undefeated in singles and doubles (with partner Tony Rigby). Oxfordshire had something of a surprise win over 2nd in table Worcestershire. At 4 all Dave Harse (Ox) beat Roy Norton 18 and 20 to seal the win. Gloucestershire lost 2-7 to Cheshire 2nds and this could well mean relegation. Wiltshire's hopes of promotion from VETS 1B, and an immediate return to Premier Division, took a hard knock when they were comprehensively beaten 8-1 - all events 2 straight - by Dorset. Dorset take over the lead. Berkshire, who beat Surrey 2nds 8-1, have equal points with Dorset and promotion will not be decided until the final round. In the Berkshire/Surrey

match "expedite" was called at 8 all in the Wally Allanson (Bk)/Frank Hams clash - Allanson won 12 and 17. Middlesex had a good 8-1 win over Sussex 2nds. The match score stood at 4 - all between Essex 2nds and Kent 2nds. John White (K), who had already beaten Essex No.1 - Fred Lockwood, then had to meet their No.3 - Jim Hobley. What a surprise when Hobley won 8 and 8 to get Essex the 2 points!

In VETS 2A there is another successful Lancashire team. With an 8-1 win over Cheshire 3rds they are unbeaten and will replace their 1st team in Division 1. Mabel Neary (La) got 100% singles wins. There were some hard fought matches in the Northumberland/Staffordshire clash e.g., John Russel (Nd) beat John Taylor 21, -19, 21! Northumberland won 6-3. Warwickshire visited Northamptonshire 2nds for a VETS 2B match. The visitors went into a 3 nil lead. Northants fought back but Warwickshire got home 5-4. Bedfordshire beat bottom of table Norfolk 2nds 6-3. David Juler (Nk) played well to win his 2 events.

There are 3 teams with 8 points at top of VETS 2C. Berkshire are slightly ahead on sets ratio after a 9-nil win over Oxfordshire 2nds. Essex 3rds beat Middlesex 2nds 7-2 but Surrey 3rds, the other team on 8 points, did not have a match in this round. Buckinghamshire look favourites for the title. Sussex 3rds, without a point, put up a good fight but lost 4-5 to Kent 3rds.

Somerset are unbeaten in VETS 2D but had a hard fight against bottom of table Gloucestershire 2nds before winning 5-4. Hampshire, on their visit to Avon, did well to win 8-1. Chris Shetler (Ha) had wins at 19 and 22 in deciding games. Dorset 2nds beat Berkshire 2nds 6-3.

Warwickshire 2nds kept their unbeaten record in VETS 3A when beating Huntingdonshire 2nds 7-2. 2nd in the table Hertfordshire 2nds had an 8-1 win on their visit to Cambridgeshire. The first 5 events went to a decider. Northamptonshire 3rds, without a point, put up a very good fight against Hertfordshire 4th team before going down 4-5. Northamptonshire lost 3 events at 17, 18 and 19 in deciding games.

The unbeaten Essex 4th team lead in VETS 3B after getting a 7-2 win over

Hertfordshire 3rds. Don McGilvary (E) had 2 easy singles wins and, with Peter Ballard, won the doubles at 21 in deciding games. Wiltshire 4th team are still without a point after losing 3-6 to Sussex 4th team. Bill Willson won his 2 singles for Wiltshire. In VETS 3C Wiltshire 3rds had a very good 6-3 win over Berkshire 3rds. Royston Smith (Wi) won his 2 singles events. 7 events went to a decider in the Somerset 2nds/Hertfordshire 5th match with Somerset getting a 6-3 win. Dorset 3rds visited Ledbury and beat Herefordshire 6-3. Neville and Pat Meredith (Hr) each won a singles and combined to win the men's doubles 19 and 19.

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But whether you are an expert and many Olympians will be training there, or just someone who likes to take part in sport, La Santa will more than satisfy your needs.

It describes itself as the world's number one sport, fitness and health resort and I quite believe it.

Nowadays they are aiming for the family as much as the sports addict. Children will have a wonderful time as well as their parents in superb surroundings.

Champion Coaching

A CHEQUE for £1.3 million on behalf of the Foundation for Sport and the Arts was recently handed to Sue Cambell MBE, director National Coaching Foundation, to ensure the continuing success of the Champion Coaching Projects.

The Champion Coaching Project - administered by the N.C.F. - was launched in April of last year with the aim of providing high quality, after school sports opportunities for children in the 11-14 age group including table tennis.

Feeling the pinch

IT seems the sporting goods business is set for a downturn and it could last for some time. That is according to a survey by consultant Peter Luscombe who says the industry, which has so far survived better than most, will feel the pinch from now on.

The massive growth of recent years which has brought in £2.5m will only rise slowly and that the tendency for a few major companies to dominate the market will continue.

New bats from Yashima

NEW from Innovo International is the Yashima range of table tennis products including 23 bats starting at a retail price of £1.99.

The bat range falls into three distinct categories, leisure, training and competition. All except for the entry model are clearly marked showing the degree of speed, spin and control. Technical information is displayed on the reverse of each bat.

Yashima also offer a large range of table tennis balls, fun coloured balls and three star ITTF approved balls. The range also includes bat

and ball sets, net and post sets as well as other accessories. Innovo are the appointed UK and Ireland distributors for the Yashima brand which also includes badminton rackets, swimming accessories, golie gloves and sports bags.

Carbonblades

IF you are looking for carbon blades then you will be interested to learn that three new ones are in the market. Carbon 2000 offence, Carbon 2000 allround and Carbon 2000 defence are being marketed by that successful team of Lesley Popkiewicz and Marie Fagan of the Bat Workshop in Wandsworth.

Their latest newsletter claims that the sweet spot on these blades is much larger which ensures a truer shot even after off centre contact which seems to be the ideal bat for the likes of yours truly.

"There's been constant demand for these blades since their arrival in this country" said Marie.

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Tomado	14.99	Butterfly Andrejz Grubba	19.99	2 Bat Wallet	4.99
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		Butterfly National League			
		Net & Post Set	24.99		

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Blackpool's 60th Anniversary

THE BLACKPOOL & District Table Tennis League are to celebrate their 60th Anniversary as a league by staging their first major tournament in the resort on Saturday 30th and Sunday 31st May 1992.

The Tournament is to be held at the NORCALYMPIA Hotel Complex, incorporating a social event on the Saturday evening, which it is hoped both competitors and spectators will take advantage of. There will be both Senior and Junior events, including a Men's and Women's Class 2 event, a Mixed Class 3 event, a Veterans event and Men's, Women's and Mixed Doubles events.

The League Committee has worked hard to negotiate sponsorship from the Blackpool Borough Council of £600 and a prize fund of £2000 is to be sponsored by Marie Curie Cancer Care Charity.

It is hoped that this innovative step in sponsorship will create an active interest in the charity by Table Tennis players, clubs and leagues, which will in due course benefit the charity in increased donations. If this is in fact the case, in the next twelve months following the tournament, then Mr. Andy Williamson, the North West Regional Appeals Manager for Marie Curie has suggested there may well be the possibility of a 5 year contract between the Blackpool League and Marie Curie, securing £2000 per annum, to establish the event in the Table Tennis calendar.

As players in the North West will appreciate it is some years now since any quality tournaments have been staged in Lancashire, and hopefully they will support a tournament of this stature, thus ensuring its future as an annual event and put Lancashire on the map once again.

Entry forms are available from Paul Connolly, 29 Sefton Avenue, Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire, FY6 8BL, tel: (0253) 886044 and at both Senior and Junior Tournaments on the circuit.

Income Tax on payments

WITH effect from 1st April 1992, certain payments can only be made after deduction of tax at the basic rate of 25%.

This will include amounts paid for coaching, squad fees, international appearances etc.; in other words any activity which represents a type of contract for services. The necessity for this follows a PAYE audit carried out recently by the Inspector of Taxes. As a result they have presented us with a substantial bill covering the last five years and it seems likely that the Association are going to have to bear some of the tax on payments made since 1987.

I realise that this is going to cause a considerable amount of irritation, heartache, nervous breakdowns etc. You can be sure that it is much easier just to pay an amount over and then be done with it, but in order to protect the Association I have to make these 25% deductions and then pay the total amount deducted to the Inland Revenue each month. Having to keep control of all this, and acting as an unpaid tax-gatherer means a considerable amount of extra work, but unfortunately there is no alternative. In April 1993 after the end of the tax year everyone who has suffered a tax deduction will be sent a detailed list showing for each payment the date, gross amount and the tax deducted with totals for the year, which you have to include in your yearly tax return.



WOMEN'S COACHING WEEKEND



In conjunction with the ETTA's Women's Committee a Women's Coaching Weekend has been arranged and is open to players of all ages and standards.

DATES:	Friday, 1st May - Sunday, 3rd May 1992 Arrival at 8pm and departure at 3.30pm
VENUE:	The new Milton Keynes Table Tennis Centre
HOTEL:	Wayfarer Hotel, Willen Lake, Milton Keynes An excellent hotel overlooking Willen Lakes Accommodation in twin rooms
MEALS:	Breakfast is included in the cost. Other meals are available at the Centre
COACHES:	JACKIE BELLINGER and LISA LOMAS
COST:	£61.00 each inc. coaching, hotel & breakfast

Places are limited to 16 women on a first come, first served basis, but requiring a minimum of 12 registrations to be confirmed.

This is a great opportunity for women and girls to receive professional coaching from ex-England International JACKIE BELLINGER and former champion and England No.1 LISA LOMAS.

If you would like to improve your game don't miss this course.

To Register, contact the ETTA Coaching Administrator at: English Table Tennis Association, Queensbury House, Havelock Road, Hastings, East Sussex. TN34 1HF
Telephone: 0424 722525

Old hands in finals

ENGLISH SCHOOLS' TABLE TENNIS

THE finalists in the Dunlop National Schools Team Championships to be played at the Lea Green Sports Centre in Derbyshire are now known, and some interesting matches look to be in prospect.

The 'old hands' will be there with Peniel Academy (Girls 16 and Boys 11), Grove, Market Drayton (Girls 19) and Archbishop Cranmer Middle, Leeds (Girls B) all defending titles, while Bedford Modern, runners up in the Boys 16 twelve months ago, will be looking to go one better as they take on Grove and Birkenhead 6th

Form College in the Boys 19 and regain the title they won in 1986 and 1987.

The Birkenhead side, led by Cheshire County player Mark Newns, are one of the newcomers to the finals and, although they were held to a draw by a useful quartet from High Pavement College, Nottingham, nevertheless finished at the top of the four team table.

Also impressing in the North Region finals were two other first time competitors in Sutton High from St. Helens, who fielded several promising boys from the Lancashire squad, and Christleton C.P. from Chester.

In the South and East

Region Whitgift, South Croydon, who call upon four youngsters all ranked in the National lists in Darren Blake, Stephen Lampkin, James Furner and Lal Tulsiani - the last three named still competing at Cadet level - edged out Peniel on sets ratio after playing out a draw with the Essex side.

The Boys 16 should be a mighty battle with Whitgift lining up against Sutton High and Grove, the latter never to be dismissed lightly.

This season the popular Individual Championships move to a new and larger venue at the Sports Connexion, Coventry on Saturday, May 2nd and organiser Paul Birch is looking at a new format which will ensure that each and every competitor will play a worthwhile number of games.

Major moves too, are taking place on the international front where ESTTA are actively pursuing the possibility of staging a World Schools International at Birmingham over Easter 1993, a venture which will see the Association working jointly with the National Council for School Sport, the Sports Council, the City of Birmingham Recreational and Community Service Department, the ETTA and, of course, our major sponsors, the Dunlop Sports Company.

Preparations are, as yet, at an early stage, but two key officials have already been named with Eddie Mitchell, a leading figure in the formative years of ESTTA and now on the staff of Birmingham's Recreational Services Department,

undertaking the duties of Event Co-ordinator, while Tony Chatwin, one of ETTA's top officials, will act as Referee.

ESTTA have been able to undertake the tremendous work load involved thanks to the offer of the Table Tennis Association of Wales to stage this year's Annual Schools' International Invitation Tournament in Cardiff over the weekend of 4th/5th July.

Still looking overseas, this time to East Africa, Chairman John Blackband was delighted to receive a letter from John Sebbowa, the Chairman of the Uganda National Schools TTA with the object of strengthening relationships between the two Associations. It is good to note that the TT flag is being shown on the African continent and, who knows, we may have the opportunity to meet new friends from Uganda in Birmingham in 1993.

Finally, I was pleased to receive the attractively produced brochures giving details of the Dunlop Skills Award scheme, another venture highlighting the co-operation between the Dunlop Sports Company, ETTA and ESTTA. There is something there for every youngster who plays the game from the beginner to those aspiring to a place in representative teams, so come on teachers, youth leaders, coaches and senior players - flood Hastings out with applications, for here is one award whose standing will increase, rather than the opposite, as more and more are made.

BLACKPOOL LEAGUE

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A DONIC TOURNAMENT



Isle of Dog's robot

SIXTEEN young players of the George Green Table Tennis Club based on the Isle of Dogs, attended an intensive three day training course. Coaches Paul Runham and Laurie Laken, with the aid of the 'robot', trained the youngsters to go for 100 consecutive shots in six of the basic table tennis strokes.

After coaching sessions in the morning, the trainees put what they learned into practice by competing in tournaments. Trophy winners were as follows:-

JUNIOR OPEN

Thanh Chu R/U: Ranjit Singh

JUNIOR RESTRICTED

Dean Coveley R/U: Michael

McWilliams

UNDER 12's

Wesley Jones R/U: Bibash Sen

HARD BAT CONTEST

Dean Coveley R/U: Chue Ting Li

HANDICAP KNOCKOUT

Chue Ting Li R/U: Richard Giles

These youngsters are struggling in their first inter-league matches in their home county of Middlesex, but hoped to make some impact at the County Closed Championships at the end of March.



Bayer sponsor trio



Bradford trio of (left to right) Mark Smith, Caroline Bentley and Darren Wright

(Reproduced by kind permission of Bradford Star)

A BIG sponsor has served up some financial help for three young local table tennis champs so they can meet the cost of travelling to matches.

Youngsters Caroline Bentley, Darren Wright and Mark Smith have all been given support by the Bradford-based Bayer Fibres Business Group to help with training and paying for long journeys.

Coach Hans Soova is delighted at the sponsorship which he says totals "hundreds of pounds."

Bradford Girls Grammar School pupil Caroline (16), of Wibsey, is the number six girl table tennis player in England as well as an English Schools International player and a member of the Yorkshire county team.

Darren (12) of Odsal, who attends Delph Hill Middle School is the U13 and U14 Bradford schools champion and was voted the most promising young player to succeed at table tennis by the Tees Sport Table Tennis Summer School.

Mark Smith (15) is also being sponsored as England's number 40 junior player and a player at the county level. He lives in Clayton and attends Rhodesway Upper School.

The talented trio train at the Eccleshill Sports Centre and Nab Wood Sports Centre.

Coach Hans Soova is delighted at the sponsorship and said it will mean the three players can reach a higher standard in the sport. "It will help ease the financial burden," he said.

Willesden Schools Tournament

FOR the first time Willesden and District Table Tennis League ran a Schools Tournament at The John Billam Sports Centre on Sunday 2nd February 1992. It was attended by 160 school children ages ranging from 9 to 17 years old.

Cadet Boys was contested by Jason Sugrue and Marcos Wiltshire. Jason having come from a table tennis family proved too strong for Marcos. Jason beat Marcos 15, 24. Cadet Girls was contested by Nina Baum and Carolyn Piper. Nina who is being coached at Ellenborough Table Tennis Club is going to be one of the stars of the future. Nina beat Carolyn 14, 13. Cadet Open Doubles was contested by Jason Sugrue/Yemen Oyede and Oliver Wakelam/James Wakelam. This was one of the most exciting finals of the afternoon. Oliver and James aged 9 gave a very hard time to Jason and Yemen who beat Oliver and James 15, 12. The Wakelam twins if they carry on training will be future stars and I am sure will go on to represent England.

Junior Boys was contested by Stuart Allin and David Woolfe. This was a very orthodox match with both players using top spin and power forehands. Stuart beat David 16, 14. Junior Girls was contested by Kate O'Callaghan and Vicky Avraam. The girls really enjoyed their day. Vicky who comes from a Table Tennis family with relatives Costas Papantoniou and Michael Papantoniou really showed her class. Vicky beat Kate 7, 8.

Junior Open Doubles was contested by J. Sugrue/Y. Oyede and Y. Amanuel/D. Abbey this was another exciting match with Y. Amanuel and D. Abbey beating J. Sugrue and Y. Oyede 25, 13.

Excitement reached its height



A feline tournament. Drawn by Louis Wain for his album *Ping-Pong*, about 1900. The Gurney Collection

LAWN TENNIS AND CROQUET - not surprisingly, perhaps, supported the 'table tennis' code and gives a fully detailed account of the first tournament. A large entry, 192 gentlemen and 49 ladies, was attracted, including many well-known lawn tennis players such as C. G. Eames, the rather eccentric former champion of Kent noted for exclaiming, "Glad!" rather than the more orthodox, "Sorry!" when he had a lucky shot. He seems to have transferred his loyalty from tennis to table tennis as he became older, but his book, the *A.B.C. of Table Tennis* (1902) is highly idiosyncratic. *Lawn Tennis and Croquet* notes that it is surprising that so very few well-known tennis players achieve much success in table tennis tournaments. Later, this was to change when Fred Perry, Eric Filby, Ann Haydon and Vera Dace achieved eminence at both sports.

The magazine further stated:- "Lawn tennis experts also played a very much more dashing game, making much longer drives, and playing altogether a harder game." This was in contrast to the table tennis players' methods which, as a rule, were based

on defence and the skilful use of the half-volley. As it turned out, only one of the tennis players, George Greville, reached the last four, finishing in third place. R.D. Ayling became the first men's champion while Miss V. Eames (daughter of C. G. Eames) won the ladies' competition. *The Graphic* of 21st December, 1901, gives us some account of the men's final:-

"Excitement reached its height when the final tie was played. Every seat around the enclosure was occupied, and beyond that the crowd was three and four deep. The two players were exponents of entirely opposite styles - the backhand and the 'scoop'. Mr. Baker played the more showy and brilliant game, of which judicious placing was the strongest point; but the steady, cautious play of Mr. Ayling told in the end, and he became the champion." We are told also that nearly all the gentlemen played in their shirt sleeves - simply removing their jackets with no change of shirt - and one of them wore white tennis flannels, to the consternation of his opponents, who frequently lost sight of the ball. The

general conclusion drawn by *Lawn Tennis and Croquet* from this event was that the game required more variety to make it more interesting to the spectators and that some method should be devised for introducing volleying. This would also minimise the chances of the unenterprising 'stonewaller'.

In contrast to the *Daily Chronicle* reporter, W.H.M., writing in *Punch* on 18th December, 1901, is clearly a supporter of the game. He gives the only detailed account of a tournament scene, circa 1900, which has so far been discovered - though others, perhaps, will be found in private letters or diaries of the period. The date suggests that W.H.M. may well have attended the Royal Aquarium Tournament a few days before and partly, at least, based his keenly-observed article on what he saw there.

"The scene is a large hall in an outlying suburb during the progress of a Ping-Pong tournament 'open to all comers'. The hall is furnished with four trestle tables stained dark green, across each of which a white net is adjusted. Surrounding the tables at a little

TABLE TENNIS The Early Years - 2

distance from them are two rows of chairs filled with spectators. At each of the tables men and ladies are playing with a tense seriousness and pent-up anxiety that is almost hysterical. Crowded in the centre of the hall and streaming up and down the avenues between the 'courts' is an intensely excited mass of people: local champions with vellum bats protruding from their bosoms; reverend fathers waiting on the victory of their unbeaten youngest; pretty cousins in sables waiting to know when he will play; anxious mammas with flaming cheeks getting hints for future ping-pong parties; besides grave smile-lorn umpires carrying formidable scoringboards. It is four o'clock. The atmosphere is tropical. There is an incessant ping - pong - ping - pong - ping - pong - ping - pong - not unlike a lull in the Parrot House at the Zoo. Occasional outbursts of clapping and other forms of applause add to the din....!" This gives a highly authentic 'feel'. W.H.M. goes on to give some

rather facile dialogue between the spectators and players.

Tournaments were played all over Great Britain in the season of 1901-1902, reaching a peak, perhaps, in February, 1902, when, under 'Coming Events' the *Pioneer* announced no fewer than twenty-two places where tournaments were to be played during the month; these were spread over three countries embracing England, Ireland and Wales.

The variety of events was quite remarkable. The men's and ladies' singles were soon established as the major championships, but men's doubles and mixed doubles, often called 'the four-handed game', were introduced. Ladies' doubles, however, does not appear to have been played. Mixed singles - in which the ladies often performed very successfully - was a feature of some early tournaments as well as events for juniors and novices. Handicap events (with lawn tennis scoring) and consolation events were also known. A surprising feature is that

sometimes more ladies than men entered these tournaments.

The method of play at 'Prize Meetings' was laid down by the Table Tennis Association as a combination of the American and 'knock-out' system, that is the players were drawn into sections so arranged as to reduce them to four. Semi-finals and the final were then played on the 'knock-out' system, with a play-off for third/fourth place. Games were played up to 20 points (with a 2 point lead required from 19 all), up to 30 or even up to 50, this depending, presumably, on the number of entries, with possibly only one game in the early rounds and best-of-three later.

Reproduced by kind permission of the publishers - The International Table Tennis Federation, 53 London Road, St. Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex TN37 6AY, from whom this interesting book is available.



The first ping-pong tournament in New Zealand, Christchurch, 1902. Canterbury County Library

Cause of controversy

ONE of the jobs of an umpire at a tournament is to inspect rackets to ensure they are legal. If the umpire has any doubts about the legality of a racket he is obliged to show it to the referee for a final decision. We find that the main cause of controversy is damage to the edge of the rubber, and the fact that the covering is rarely the same size as the blade. We reproduce a letter recently received on this subject:-

Dear Sirs,

Recently I was at the Essex Junior Select where, correctly and in accordance with the laws of table tennis, a player had his racket taken to the referee because the rubber did not finish at the outer edge of the blade, but was about 1.5mm undersize over 25% or less of the circumference of the blade.

The referee stated that the player could not play in the tournament with the racket in that condition, and his advice was to "borrow a bat or buy a new rubber".

I feel that it is time that umpires and referees accepted that the country is in recession and that many parents are giving up things rather than prohibit their children from enjoying the sport.

This instance should have been considered more carefully by both the umpire and the referee because, as a new rubber was needed, then surely some parents would not have had the resources to allow their child to continue.

The child in question was twelve years old playing in the under 17 category against the current No.25, and apart from the fact that not many players play with the edge of their rackets, the outcome of the match was never in doubt.

Did the child really have to suffer the upset of what I can only describe as a poor decision, particularly in a tournament where the draw was changed at a whim.

Please do not destroy the future of our sport by driving out our children.

*Yours in sport,
R. R. Thompson, Chairman
Kent County T.T.A.*

The Last Volley

We have received a letter from Stan Buchan, Chairman and Secretary of the Scottish Table Tennis Association, on the subject of the volley and our pointing out the possibility that it could be covered by the obstruction law. He refers back to 1953 before the idea of obstruction was introduced, and thinks we are getting all steamed up about



Jack Melnick

volleying and "losing ourselves by complicating everything". We know we are not steamed up and thought we were trying to simplify things!

As Stan suggests, let us go back to the thinking that led to the framing of these laws.

There was a law that said in effect that the ball must not be stopped over the table "not yet having touched the playing surface on his side of the table" or the player would lose the point. This avoided any arguments about whether the ball might have been going to bounce on the table. However, it would cost a point if the ball, not having touched the table, was stopped by the racket even if the ball had passed over the table. Maybe this was some carry over from lawn tennis.

But then, we think it was the Chinese, with impeccable logic pointed out that the same doubts about whether the ball might have been going to bounce on the table, could be raised if a wide but unswinging return was stopped before it had passed the end line, and so the idea of "obstruction" was devised in 1983. This combined the two principles of not stopping the ball over the table, and not stopping the ball before it had passed the end line if it had not yet passed over the table.

The bald definition of obstruction to keep things simple does, of course, lead to oddities like losing a point if the ball is stopped well wide of the table and going wider if it has not passed over the table and has not yet passed the end line, even if the ball is below the level of the table surface. No odder, of course, than losing a point by volleying the ball near to the barrier to avoid interrupting play in the next court.

We merely ask "What does the volley definition add to the situation?" Don't forget that the umpire was always deemed capable of deciding whether the ball was over the table when struck in serving, or stopped before it had bounced on the offending player's side, and now in the offence of obstruction. Isn't it simpler without the volley rule?

We think we should now close correspondence on "volleying".

Clothing

For general information the latest price list for umpires blazers etc., which has been agreed between the ETTA and a new supplier, is printed below:-

Blazer (blue)	£82.25
Trousers (grey)	£31.72
Skirt (grey)	£28.20
Blouse/shirt (white)	
Long sleeves	£ 9.05
Short sleeves	£ 8.40
Pullover (blue)	
Botany wool, long sleeves	£24.67
Botany wool, sleeveless	£22.32
Acrylic, long sleeves	£14.01
Acrylic, sleeveless	£12.92

Anyone wishing to buy a made-to-measure blazer, trousers or skirt should obtain a self-measurement form from the ETTA Office and return it with the appropriate payment.

We wonder whether the new price of a blazer will be something of a deterrent to people becoming county umpires.

Umpire selections

Selections have been made for forthcoming events as follows:-

National Team Finals June 6th, Stantonbury

E.A. Pentland, A. Harwood, Mrs. P. Archdale, G.G. Hammond, D. Edwards, J. Melnick, K.A. Arnson, G. Tyler, E. Emecz, G. Lynch, M. Strode, D.A. Young.

Halex U10/U12 June 13th/14th Bletchley

R. Wilson, H.A. Spraggs, A. Harwood, Mrs. P. Archdale, Mrs. D. Nightingale, T. Vance, Miss D. Moors, B. Lamerton, T. Darroch, D. Edwards, B. Eston, J. Melnick, G. Tyler, E. Emecz, D. Miller.

Jack Melnick - A Self Portrait

Born in Highbury, North London, which makes me a life-long Arsenal supporter. Bombed out in 1940 while living in Stoke Newington, East London, moved to Perivale in West London, then on to Wembley in 1977, where I have been ever since.

Played table tennis through the youth clubs, went into the RAF in 1953 where I played for the station team, then demobbed in 1955.

Came into umpiring in 1969 through Doreen Stannard when I happened to be umpiring at the Gunnersbury Triangle Championships where she was a guest and she asked me why I didn't take it up

seriously. Failed first time. Then I took my International paper and thought, "Am I going to be a three time loser", but no, I passed first time. I believe it is true to say that I am the only umpire to pass his National and International in the same year, 1974.

In the 1977 World Championships in Birmingham I reached the pinnacle of my career by umpiring the Ladies Singles final. Since then I have performed at two Commonwealth Championships (Cardiff and Edinburgh), two Europeans (Berne and Prague) and two more Worlds (Novi Sad and Gothenburg). Now another highlight, the Olympic Games in Barcelona. I have also umpired at Open events in Belgium, Holland, Sweden and USA.

I still play the game at club level in three leagues which keeps me reasonably fit. Away from table tennis I do a lot of swimming, at least once a week throughout the year which again keeps me fit. Also when not umpiring at weekends I like to go to the Arsenal.

Workwise I am a proof reader, which I have been doing for about 44 years since the start of my apprenticeship in 1948. I will finish with the immortal words of ex-General Secretary of the ETTA, Albert Shipley, "Oh! Sorry, you are standing."

READER'S REPLY

Congratulations on your umpires corner.

It is pleasing to see someone attempting to help set the standards of rule application.

As a recent recruit to the ranks, I find that many umpires are reluctant to discuss the decisions they have made, or the varying standards adopted in interpreting the service rule.

The biggest problem appears to be in the local leagues where no player is ever taken to task about doubtful serving. Only when the player starts to make progress, does he find that a serve that won him apparently good points in local league, costs him points in an event where correct standards are applied.

I was interested in your comments on umpires dress. Officiating locally, I find that the visiting umpires are always well turned out, and a credit to their calling. However, as local authorities save money on heating, and along with many older colleagues feel the cold, I would like to be able to wear some type of thermal sweat shirt top. This could be warm and smart. I get no great pleasure in being frozen for long periods. The players can exercise to keep warm.

*Frank Draycott
Billingham, Cleveland*

5th English Wheelchair Table Tennis Championships 2-4 May 1992

BRITISH WHEELCHAIR TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION

1992 is Barcelona Paralympic year and the BWTTA continues its tradition of staging an International Table Tennis tournament as part of its preparations for the Great Britain squad.

However, this, the 5th such event will be a special occasion for one man in particular and BWTTA are dedicating it to him.

For 30 years Ted Inge has been influential in the development of Table Tennis for the Disabled both at home and abroad. Regretably, after the paralympics he intends to retire from the International scene he helped to formulate and play a less active role in

the affairs of the National Association.

Being the man he is, Ted has forged friendships with players, coaches and officials from all over the world and they have responded overwhelmingly to this tribute. Over 100 players from 17 Nations have accepted the invitation to join the Home Countries and make this the largest Wheelchair Table Tennis event to be staged in this country since the Europeans in 1987.

The event is open to all wheelchair players in Great Britain, from club level to international level. It is hoped that this event will encourage some 'Past Masters' to come out of retirement and help celebrate the occasion.

Dave's accident



Dave Seaholme of the Vagabonds Table Tennis club, slipped on a wet floor during a Wembley League match against Kenton, and gashed his shin against the table's low horizontal bar, which resulted in a 4" cut to the bone. This highlights the remarks made in last month's Umpires' Corner

LION SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

THE first three correct entries drawn from the hat will win, 1st a Lion insulated bat case, 2nd a Lion bat case and 3rd a box of Lion 3 star balls.

All entries must be received by 30th April 1992 addressed to Bethan Davies at Hastings (Editor's decision is final).

In this issue's 'Lion Spot the Difference' competition you are required to circle with a pen the 10 deliberate differences in Cartoon B.

Below are the lucky winners in the April 1992 competition:

- 1st: G. Humphreys, 16 Victoria Street, Oakhampton, Devon.
2nd: I. Wong, Celia Marsh House, Headington School, Oxford.
3rd: D. Abbotts, 27 Lower Park Road, Hastings, East Sussex.



Name : _____

Address : _____

Wrong, Mr. Sladden

MR. B. SLADDEN (TT News, February), suggests that recent moderate junior results may be due to "saving money under the Preat Administration..."

Though my team found the ETTA virtually bankrupt when we took office, we did not cut the total expenditure devoted to junior activities of all kinds. As the financial position improved, substantially larger sums were devoted to junior activities. There is a modern trend to attribute all ills to "inadequate resources being made available" - from Health Service to Railways. However, whatever the reasons for junior standards (inadequate according to Mr. Sladden), this is certainly not due to putting less money into the junior game.

Having been very closely involved with a junior whose level Mr. Sladden would probably regard as 'acceptable' (at any rate, 5 gold medals in European Youth Championships), I have to tell him that ETTA input played a minor part. The player has never attended a 'Centre of Excellence' and his education took priority over training camps. Mr. Sladden over-estimates the role a governing body can play in producing the occasional outstanding player. If Mr. Sladden attended an excellent seminar on this subject a year or so ago, he would have heard that subject greatly enlarged. Speakers included Don Parker, Kevin Satchell, Alan Ransome and myself. Alan was, of course, the deputy chairman and a valued member of the 'Preat administration'.

It was put about, for reasons that do little for the perpetrators, that we cut junior expenditure. We maintained it even in those dark days when we were £90,000 in the red and increased it substantially as time went on. If the editor would care to make a page available to me in a future issue, I am quite prepared to list the main achievements and expenditure in the junior area in my time. Mr. Sladden and many others will be surprised.

John Preat
(Chairman ETTA 1986-1991)

Different Motives

AS a Sussex parent, I would like to disassociate myself from the remarks about Grove tournaments. (Sussex County notes, TTN February 1992). I also resent the assertion that we parents are spending vast sums of money and travelling hundreds of miles simply so that our children can win computer points. We are intelligent enough to realise that, in two-star and one-star events, players are likely to lose as many points as they win. Our motives are quite different.

In Hastings, we have been lucky enough to have some top-class coaching during the past year, but

the aspect of the game that our young people lack is match experience against high quality, varied opposition. With only two County training sessions a year, for a select few, and one very expensive County Junior 'closed' Tournament, we have no alternative but to travel so that our children can gain this experience - and this is the purpose of our journeys. The acquisition of otherwise of computer points is much less important.

During two years of travelling the tournament circuit, we have found that the tournaments at the Grove have by far the friendliest atmosphere and offer the best value for money. They are well organised but relaxed and have plenty of events, including consolations. Where else can you be guaranteed 20 matches in a weekend and the opportunity to play high class players from abroad? I think the youngsters from Shropshire are lucky to be close to a club that shows such enterprise and gives them so many opportunities to play table tennis. I have nothing but admiration for Ian Marshall, Geoff Twiss and their helpers who spend many long weekends at the control table, not to mention all the time they must spend organising the tournaments and clearing up afterwards.

Our journey may be long and we may not be better off in terms of computer points, but the experience gained is always a plus. And no-one is forcing us to 'dig deeper and deeper' into our pockets. Are we to be blamed if we choose to go to the Grove and have the certainty of playing all day rather than drive hundreds of miles and risk getting knocked out after only one match as can happen in some tournaments?

We do not wish to be included in Sussex's childish boycott. Keep up the good work, Grove!

Diana M. Abbotts
Hastings

"Whipping boys"

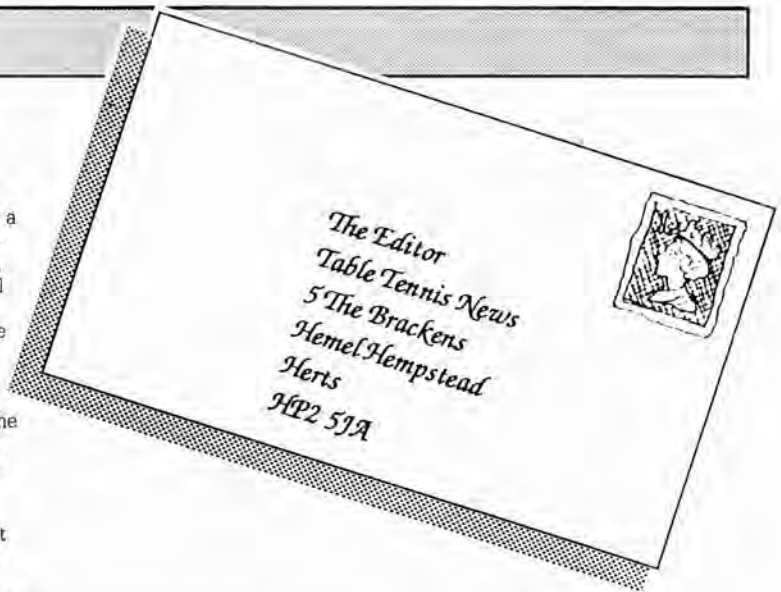
BEFORE having a sarcastic dig at local league officials about the poor attendance at the China match in Sheffield (TT News February 1992) I feel the two reporters should have first checked the facts with their "whipping boys"

For a start, the event was arranged by the ETTA and Sheffield City Council for the evening of New Years Day - when there was no public transport.

Then the two organisers switched the fixture from the originally-advertised central Ponds Forge venue to Concord Sports Centre, three miles away, causing confusion to both venues and potential ticket-buyers.

This prompted me, as Sheffield publicity officer, to ring Hastings for some information on the match when I was assured that press and other administration was well in hand.

The only other contact between the ETTA and the Sheffield league (I cannot speak for other local leagues)



was a vague last-minute invitation to a site meeting which, due to previous engagements and the short notice, only one of our committee members could attend.

We were promised delivery of tickets to one of our December meetings but they never arrived and, as far as I know, we were never approached again for assistance in staging the match.

With Sheffield league involvement I am sure the crowd could have been doubled. In October 1989 we staged an England versus Netherlands European League match and attracted between 600 and 800 spectators according to which estimate in Table Tennis News December 1990 is nearest.

In March 1982 between 500 and 600 people watched an England A team play an England B team in Sheffield (probably some sort of a record for a "friendly" with no foreign players on view). This was when Poland failed to turn up for a Super Division clash which the Sheffield league had taken on at only five weeks notice.

Fortunately, the Sheffield league was wise enough to insure the event because of the political situation at that time thus saving ourselves and/or the ETTA from a huge financial loss.

So I would suggest to Messrs. Eaton and Woodford that the Sheffield league officials are quite capable of organising international table tennis in the city - but it would help if we were asked to get involved in the first place.

John Hatfield
Publicity Officer - Sheffield TTL

Free Advertising

MR. LENTON's letter in which he has managed to get himself free advertising for the products reminds me of management committee meetings in my first three years as Treasurer. During that time, an average of 15% of management time was spent discussing and dealing with the many problems which his scheme was causing, giving rise to lots of complaints from players who had every right to expect a better service from the Association. His

quoted costs of "in excess of £10,000/£12,000 per year" (whatever that means) will come as quite a surprise to those people who received occasional payments for keying in data.

I was very pleased indeed when Mr. Lenton's offer to withdraw his ranking scheme was accepted by National Council. It meant the end of my hours of time wasting. A large number of people will remember the 1988 European Championships in Paris for one particular reason. There our best player had his chances of success ruined simply because Mr. Lenton had not bothered to pay the licence fee required by the I.T.T.F. which made his rubber illegal. I should remind you as well that the Leeds expressed complete satisfaction with the results of their three year involvement with us.

Peter Hillier
ETTA Hon. Treasurer

Olympic Year

NATIONAL journalists covering table tennis are not finding it easy to win space in 1992, the year of 25th Olympiad. The national press is also finding the going tough with restrictions on space due to the recession and more and more sports bidding for space.

Telegraph readers will have noticed that my Tuesday column has on occasions been omitted, but so far, except for one week, my copy has appeared on the following day. Up to February 19th the Telegraph carried since September 125 table tennis stories, excluding results.

Despite the Tuesday column delays, I shall continue to file stories on Mondays and of course, during the week as events occur.

John Woodford
Eastbourne

PLEASE NOTE

We would like to make it clear that Table Tennis News does not necessarily agree with the views made by those correspondents whose letters are published in Mailbox.

Your letters that are NOT abusive or libellous are always welcome as are replies.

Only those when names and addresses are supplied for publication will in future be considered.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ENGLISH JUNIOR OPEN TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sat/Sun/Mon - 23rd/24th/25th May 1992
(Bank Holiday Weekend)

The Spa Royal Hall,
Bridlington

Entries Close 16th April 1992

INTERNATIONAL ENTRIES INCLUDE:
Japan - Germany - France

WOMEN'S BRITISH LEAGUE (Second Weekend)

Saturday/Sunday 16th/17th May 1992

National Sports Centre of Wales
Sophia Gardens, Cardiff

Organiser: Mike Lewis (0272 730788)

ENGLISH COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS JUNIOR PREMIER WEEKEND

11th/12th April 1992
Sat From 1.00 pm - Sun From 9.00 am

Batley Sports Centre,
Windmill Lane, Batley, W. Yorks
Details: Stan Parr (0203 385580)

BRISTOL 2* OPEN TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS

25th/26th April 1992

Thornbury Leisure Centre

Details: Peter Sandford (0272 56938)

TABLE TENNIS INFORMATION LINE 0891 664300

Call Cost 36p per minute cheap rate and 48p per minute at other times



HALEX NATIONAL UNDER 18/21 CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sunday/Monday 3rd/4th May 1992
(Bank Holiday Weekend)

The Spa Royal Hall, Bridlington

Entries Close 13th April 1992

Details From: *Clive Oakman,*
ETTA Events Manager (0424 722525)



HALEX NATIONAL UNDER 11 CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sunday 10th May 1992

South Kesteven Table Tennis Centre,
Trent Road, Grantham

Entries Close 14th April 1992

Details From:
Organiser: Ken Elliot (0427 610513)